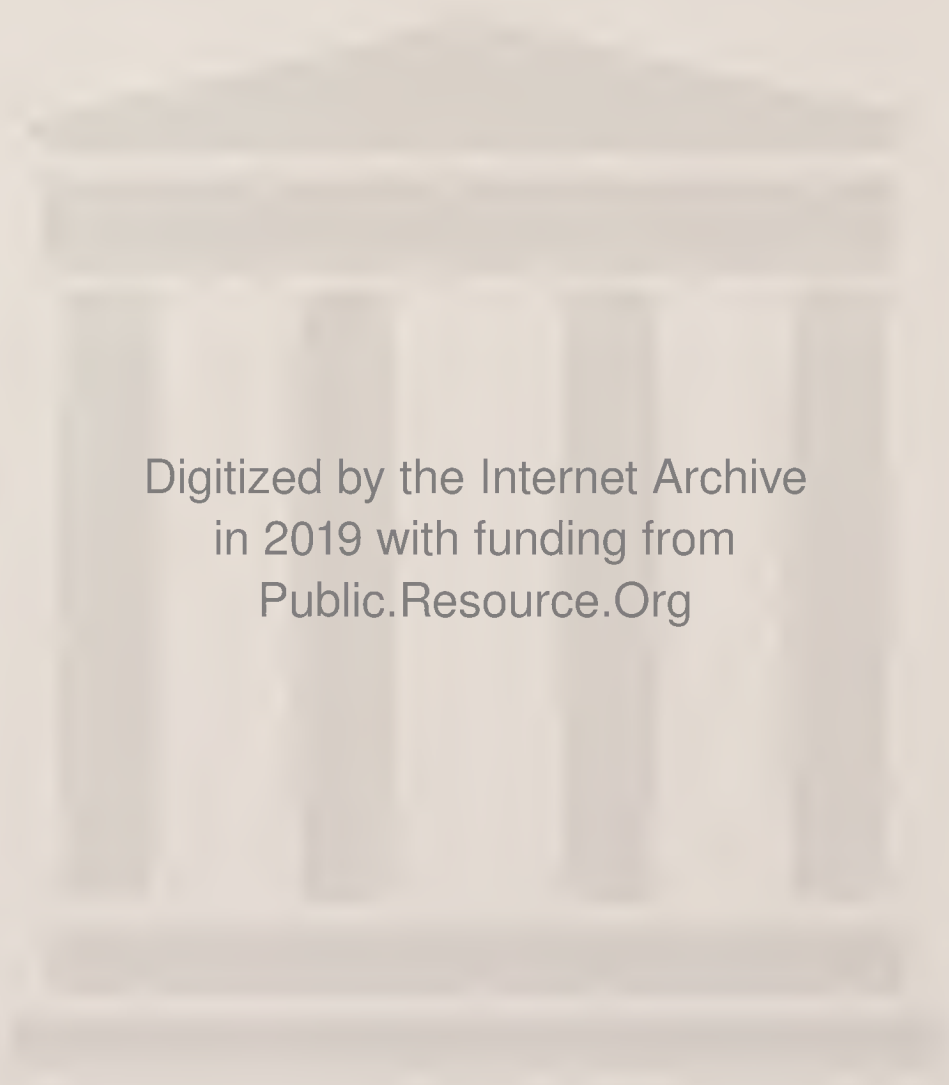


SCENES FROM THE
HISTORY OF CEYLON
BY GEORGE
MURRAY HARRISON

MURRAY HARRISON





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STORIES FROM THE
HISTORY OF CEYLON
FOR CHILDREN



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"There, under an Asoka-tree stood a maiden...."

(Frontispiece.)
(See page 63.)

STORIES FROM THE
HISTORY OF CEYLON
FOR CHILDREN

MARIE MUSÆUS-HIGGINS

IN TWO VOLUMES
VOLUME II

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ASIAN EDUCATIONAL SERVICES

* RZ-257, STREET No.19, TUGHLAKABAD EXT.,
NEW DELHI - 110019

Tel. : +91-11-29992586, 29994059, fax :+91-11-29994946

email : aes@aes.ind.in

* 2/15, 2nd FLOOR, ANSARI ROAD,
DARYAGANJ, NEW DELHI - 1100 02

Tel : +91- 11- 23262044

email : aesdg@aes.ind.in

* 19, (NEW NO. 40), BALAJI NAGAR FIRST STREET,
ROYAPETTAH, CHENNAI - 600 014

Tel. : +91- 44 - 28133040 / 28131391 / 28133020, Fax : +91-44 -28131391

email : aesmds@aes.ind.in

www.aes.ind.in



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FOR CHILDREN

BY

MARIE MUSÆUS-HIGGINS.

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FOREWORD.

This book is an attempt to supply a want which has long been felt by those who are teaching young children in Ceylon. All children love a story. Now, though there are many stories which may fairly be considered to belong to all races and all countries, there are others which only come home to the people of a particular race or country. To the latter class belong the tales by which a child gains its first notions of the history of its own land and people. It is surely unnatural that Ceylon children, especially Sinhalese children, should be brought up on stories about King Alfred or Robert Bruce, and should have no familiar associations connected with Sita or Duttu-Gemunu. It is to meet this want that the author of this book has told in simple language some of the tales of Old Ceylon, beginning with the fine old story of Rama, which belongs to Ceylon no less than to India.

I commend the book to all who are teaching young children, and shall be glad to see it in use as a Reader in Schools.

J. HARWARD,

Director of Public Instruction in Ceylon.

OCTOBER 9TH, 1909.

STORIES FROM THE HISTORY OF CEYLON.

BOOK II.

INTRODUCTION.

After the holidays were over, the children gathered again round their mother, as she was ready to resume telling her Stories of Ceylon History. The children too were quite ready to listen, and expectant eyes turned towards the teller of the stories, who had made herself comfortable in her big arm-chair on the side-verandah of the school premises.* She looked around smilingly and said:—

“Well my children, shall we go on now with our stories?”

“Oh yes, please dear mother, we are very anxious to hear more stories of our own country,” said the eldest of the girls. The mother then asked.—

“Do you remember where we left off before the holidays?”

“Certainly we know, mother,” cried the girls.

“You closed before the vacation with the stories about the just Tamil King Elala, who had a Justice-Bell, hanging over his head in his royal bedroom, and who strictly dealt out justice, even so far as to have his own son killed, because *he* had killed a calf with one of his chariot wheels,” said Yasodhara.

“You have expressed yourself very nicely,” said the mother, “I am very glad you are

* See Book I “Stories from the History of Ceylon.”

giving such a good example to the other girls. And I hope they will learn to speak as nicely as you do, dear Yasodhara."

"I hope you also remember that before the holidays I told you of a brave Sinhalese Prince of the Royal House who rose up against King Elala after he had reigned forty-four years."

"In order to find out from *where* this Prince came and *who* he was we shall have to go back to that event in King Devanampiya-Tissa's reign when his little son was killed by eating a poisoned mango, with which his mother, King Tissa's wife, really wanted to poison the King's brother Mahanaga.

Mahanaga fled to Ruhuna, where he settled down and made himself King. His capital was Magama. He was very pious and built many Viharas, of which the Dagoba at Mahiyangana in Bintenne was one of the most famous.

After his death his son succeeded him to the throne, and it was this son who founded Kelaniya or *Kelanie*.

At the time, when King Elala reigned at Anuradhapura, the great-grand-son of Mahanaga, called Kavan-Tissa, ruled in Ruhuna; while Kelanie-Tissa, a grand-son of Devanampiya Tissa's brother Uttiya reigned at Kelanie. So there were two Sub-Kings at this time, one in Ruhuna and one in Kelanie.

Both these Sub-Kings had to pay tribute to King Elala, who did not think them to be of sufficient importance to make war on them.—

And now we have arrived at our first story."

STORY I.

THE KING OF KELANIE.

CHAPTER I.

THE FATAL LETTER.

King Kelanie-Tissa was a good, pious man, but he had a very bad temper, and he sometimes got so angry that he did not know what he was doing. He devoted a great deal of time and money to religious purposes, and he specially loved and revered a great Buddhist preacher who had taught him and his brother Uttiya all Buddhist learning.

Every day he used to ask this great priest to come to the palace with his disciples and have his morning meal there. The King thought it his duty to wait on this preacher himself. The Queen also was very often present at these meetings and she herself attended to the wants of the disciples of this Arhat.

King Kelanie-Tissa's brother Uttiya, although he had had the same education as his elder brother, was not as good a man as the King, and never came to these morning meetings in the palace. He loved to roam about and seek adventures. He had specially cast his eyes on his brother's Queen and made himself very amiable to her.

King Kelanie-Tissa, of course, did not like this, and he reproached Uttiya very severely for his unprincely behaviour. But Prince Uttiya did not listen to the King and continued his bad ways of living, till the King became very angry with him. In order to avoid punishment, Uttiya left the court secretly and went to a small village in Ruhuna, where he lived in the same frivolous manner. He did not give up his designs on the Queen, but on the contrary made plans to carry her off from Kelanie-Tissa.

One day Prince Uttiya asked one of his wild companions to dress himself like a priest and go to Kelanie with a letter for the Queen. This letter was written by the Prince himself but had no signature and was in the handwriting of his revered teacher, the great Arhat. The Prince had imitated the great Arhat's handwriting so cleverly, that hardly anybody could find it out.

The disguised Priest went to Kelanie with the letter from Prince Uttiya as he was ordered and joined the disciples of the Arhat one morning when they entered the palace of Kelanie-Tissa for their usual morning meal, and he passed off as a priest.

After the meal was over the King and Queen accompanied the priests out of the palace, the King walking behind the Arhat and the Queen behind the King.

While the other priests were filing out of the palace, the disguised priest tried to catch the Queen's eye and having succeeded,



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"The disguised Priest....dropped Prince Uttiya's letter just before her...."

(To face page 5.)

dropped Prince Uttiya's letter just before her, thinking she would pick it up unnoticed by the King. But unfortunately the King heard the noise of the falling ola-leaf, on which the letter was written. He turned round, picked up the letter before the Queen could take it, and read its frivolous contents.

King Kelanie-Tissa now entirely lost control of himself. Recognizing (as he thought) the handwriting of his so much beloved teacher, he naturally believed that he had written this letter to the Queen and that instead of being a holy priest he was really a bad man. The King could hardly believe it, but the proof seemed so clear, that he could not think of anything else but how he would punish the Arahāt for this crime.

[“Mother dear” cried little Somawattie, “you called this chapter the “Fatal Letter”, but afterwards said the letter was written on an ola-leaf. Did Prince Uttiya not write a letter on paper like we do, when we write a letter home and put it in an envelope?”

“Dearie, at that time, that is about 2000 years ago, people did not know how to make paper and all *writing* was done on ola-leaves.”

“But what are ola-leaves,” insisted the little girl. “My dear little Somie, have you really never seen an ola-leaf? You are a little Sinhalese girl from the country, where the children in some schools use ola-leaves even at the present time and you tell me

you have not seen an ola-leaf? I am quite astonished."

"But I really have not," said the little girl, and looked quite ashamed, "and I would like to know very much what ola-leaves are."

"Amarawattie," said the mother, addressing a tall girl, "tell the little one, what you know about ola-leaves."

"Ola-leaves are made from the leaves of Talipot or Palmyra-palms. These leaves are very large and broad. They are first dried in the hot sun, then cut up into strips several inches broad. Into these strips the letters are scratched with a little steel needle called a stylus and then black paint or ink is rubbed over them. Only then can one see clearly the writing. When many such strips have been written on, two or three small holes are drilled through the edge of each, and all are then strung on strings passing through the holes in such a way, that each leaf can be moved away after reading it without separating it from the others. When the reading is finished, each ola-leaf is placed flat on the top of the other, and the strings drawn tight and wrapped round the bundle or book to keep it together."

"Well done, dear Amarawattie, you have given quite a good explanation."

"Do you understand now, my little Somie, what an ola-leaf is?"

"My dear mother, Amaravattie speaks of an *ola-book*, and you of an *ola-letter* and besides I do not know what '*ola*' means, because Amarawattie said '*Palmyra-leaf*.'" The mother smiled

being very much pleased that the little girl wanted to understand everything clearly.

“ ‘Ola’ means ‘leaf,’ my little girl,” she said, “and the people used to take one strip of ola-leaf and write as much on it as they wanted and sent *that* as a letter. People did not write very many letters at that time, not as we do now.—In some of the little village schools in Ceylon and in the Pansala Schools, the boys and girls have even *now* no paper and they have to prepare their own ola-leaves and bring them to school and write on them instead of on paper. When they have written on a good many strips they tie them together and so make a book. The small children, when they first begin to write and when they have no slates as you girls have, are made to write with their fingers on the sand. You see, you girls who get your education in Colombo have many advantages which the village-children have not. In olden times the priests and Pandits used to gather the boys round them, and they were taught writing, making their letters and figures on the sand of the temple-yard.”

“Did the girls not learn to write,” asked Leelawattie.

“Yes dearie, the nuns taught the girls, and the monks taught the boys. In olden times the girls learnt a good deal. You will soon hear of a very learned and clever princess, who was also very brave.

But now you have heard enough for the first night, ‘good night my children.’”]

CHAPTER II.

THE DYING ARHAT.

The King Kelanie-Tissa was so full of anger at the seeming deceit of this great teacher, that he made no attempt to enquire into the matter of the fatal letter. He had the disguised monk who had dropped the letter before the Queen, seized and put to death without questioning him, and ordered that the Arhat, who could so forget himself as to write such a letter to his Queen, should be thrown into a cauldron of boiling oil and so put him cruelly to death.

This command was actually carried out before a large assembly of monks and laymen.

The great Arhat, who was so innocently put to a cruel death, did not at all resent what the King did to him. But being guiltless, he, by the power of his great Arhat-ship was able, while slowly dying, to preach a last sermon, reciting one hundred stanzas to the assembled crowd. The people listened, overcome by grief, to the last sermon of the dying priest. They were sure that the great Arhat was innocent and could not understand how the King could torment and kill him in this dreadful manner.

The dying Arhat, instead of cursing the King, pitied and blessed him, and took his dreadful death as a punishment for some sin, which he must have committed without

knowing. His last sermon has been preserved by the priesthood and one can see in it the greatness of the Arhat's character.

[The children listened very sadly but very attentively to the account of the death of the great Arhat. None of them dared to speak, as they were almost overcome with sorrow by the fact that the great priest was actually killed by being slowly boiled to death.

They only murmured: "How dreadful, how dreadful" and went quietly away.]

CHAPTER III,

HOW THE WAVES CAME RUSHING ON !

After the cruel death of the Arhat his body was thrown into the sea. The Queen was also thrown into the sea to be drowned.

The whole populace grieved. But the King had lost his temper to such a degree that he really did not know what he was doing. He shut himself up in his palace and would not speak to anybody.

But soon the King was urgently called out of his palace, by his trembling ministers. They came as the representatives of all his

people, who were assembled before the closed gates of the palace, clamouring for help from the King !

[“ What was the matter ? ” cried the girls quite frightened ! “ What was the matter ? tell us quickly ”

“ Well, my children, there was indeed a great deal the matter, just listen,” answered the mother.]

The devas of the sea had become very angry because the King had killed the innocent holy Priest and thrown his body into the sea. They wanted to punish the King severely for his hasty and wicked deed, and so made the ocean very tempestuous as soon as the body of the great Thera touched the waves. A dreadful storm came on quite suddenly and huge waves rolled on to the shore and the land was swallowed up by them.

The people of the villages had to run for their lives, losing their huts and property and seeing their precious cocoanut palms, which were the only wealth they possessed, uprooted and falling into the sea. They could save only their lives by running further inland. The country upon which they had lived so long sank into the ocean.

Higher and higher came the waves and more and more angrily howled the storm, and the people called out for the King to help them, as he had brought all this misery upon the land !

King Kelanie-Tissa himself was so deeply sunk in grief at losing his great teacher, who had deceived him (as he thought), that he really was not aware of all that was going on outside.

When he was called on by his people and saw the waves coming nearer and nearer and his people clamouring louder and louder for help, he was quite overcome with surprise and sorrow and tried to have the waves kept back by making the people build up an embankment of trees and earth. But all was in vain. Nearer and nearer came the waves and more and more of his kingdom was swallowed up. Kelanie had been twenty-eight miles away from the ocean, and now the waves seemed almost there at the gates of the palace, threatening to swallow it up and the whole town too!

Then the King was in despair and did not know what he could do. He called his priesthood together and asked them what could be done. They were all still so grieved and indignant at the King's doings, that they too were quite helpless.

But one of the oldest and wisest of them advised the King to sacrifice to the devas of the ocean his only beloved daughter, who was very pious and beautiful. He thought that, if she would sacrifice herself *willingly*, the remaining part of the Kingdom might be saved.

The King called his daughter, who had not recovered, from the shock of her mother's

violent death, and asked her whether she would sacrifice herself *willingly* for her country's sake.

The sweet girl at once consented, for she did not wish to live after her mother's dreadful death and preparations were at once made for her sacrifice.

["How exciting", called out the girls, "please tell us a little more to-night, dear mother."

"No dear children, enough for to day", answered the mother, "to-morrow you will hear more".]

CHAPTER IV.

THE PRINCESS IN THE GOLDEN BOAT.

The Princess had herself bathed and anointed with oil and dressed in a silken cloth, her hair was hanging down in beautiful black ringlets, with the drops of water shining in it like diamonds. Adorned with pearls and all kinds of precious jewels, she was ready to enter a golden boat, in which a seat was fixed for her on a heap of jewels. An inscription was made on this golden vessel which stated, that this beautiful maiden was the daughter of King Kelanie-Tissa, and that she sacrificed herself willingly to the devas of the Ocean in order to atone for her father's sins.

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"Adorned with pearls...she was ready to enter a golden boat..."

(To face page 12.)



The Princess stepped into the boat, accompanied to the ocean by all the people of Kelanie, who sent blessings and prayers with her.

As soon as the little craft was launched into the foaming sea, the ocean stilled its waves, and the little golden boat with the beautiful Princess in it glided gently forward and the sad maiden was rocked to sleep in her frail ship and no wave wetted even her feet. The devas were satisfied with her intended self-sacrifice and they did not allow the ocean to swallow up this maiden, who was so willing to give her life to save her country.

The sea gods stopped the flood and the remaining part of King Kelanie-Tissa's country was saved from the waves. But the greater part of the land was already lost and the king had no more happiness till his death, which occurred very soon after this great calamity.

One day, when King Kelanie-Tissa was riding out on his state elephant to visit a distant temple, he was thrown from it, and history says: "That the earth opened and swallowed him up."—This was the punishment for the evil he had done by killing the holy and innocent Arhat.

["But what became of the Princess, who was sent out in the golden boat?" asked the children. "I do hope she was not drowned after all!" said Tilaka, with tears in her eyes. "What is her name," inquired inquisitive little Somawattie!

"Well, my children, there are so many

questions to be answered, that I will leave all the answers till to-morrow," said the mother smiling. "You are always in such a hurry to know everything, that I must teach you a little patience."

"What a pity" murmured the girls. But still they saw that their mother was right and they went quietly to their studies.]

STORY II.

VIHARA-MAHA-DEVI.

CHAPTER I.

HOW THE PRINCESS WAS
SAVED.

In the meanwhile our golden boat with the beautiful maiden was not swallowed up by the waves. The sea-gods led it southward by gentle winds, which rocked the little vessel like a cradle.

By and by the waves were quieted down altogether; for the moon which had hidden herself at first behind the dark storm clouds, not wanting to see what was going on in the land of Kelanie-Tissa, had peeped out shyly from behind them.

When the moon saw the little golden boat with the Princess, she quickly chased the storm clouds away and now smiled down most good-naturedly. She smoothed the waves, made them all look like a silver lake, murmuring sweetly, and so they had rocked the Princess to sleep.

Devi was dreaming that her sacrifice had been accepted and that she was in Deva-Land, among the shining little devas and devis, who led her to a beautiful palace, where she was to become the happy Queen of Deva-Land.

Thus with a heavenly smile on her radiant face she was found early next morning by some fishermen of King Kavan-Tissa of Ruhuna's household, who as usual were out fishing for the King.

The fishermen read the inscription on the boat and not daring to touch the Princess, or even the golden boat, they rowed quickly back to the shore to report to King Kavan-Tissa what they had seen.

The King himself came to the shore and sent out some of his attendants with a royal boat to bring to land the little golden vessel, which was still gently rocking on the waves.

When King Kavan-Tissa saw the inscription on the boat, "King Kelanie-Tissa's daughter, given as an offering to the sea," and when he beheld the beautiful maiden in deep sleep, as if in death, with her hair almost enfolding her like a silken mantle, he was awestruck, thinking of the love and devotion that this frail creature must have, to be willing to give her young life as a sacrifice to the waves.

He at once felt, that *he* must make her his Queen and protect her against all further troubles of life. She surely had stood the greatest trial and must be the bravest woman he had ever met. And yet she was so young, so very young, almost a child !

While King Kavan-Tissa was thus thinking loving thoughts about her, Devi opened her eyes and she seeing the King looking at her



with his earnest eyes, asked gently, (taking him perhaps for one of the devas). "Has my sacrifice been accepted? Are my country and my father safe?" "Yes," answered the King solemnly, "the sacrifice, which you so willingly gave, has been accepted. The ocean has quieted itself, and the waves have stopped swallowing up your father's land. But you yourself have come to me like a goddess of the sea. Will you be my Queen? I will cherish you and love you as you deserve!"

Devi, almost overcome by emotion at seeing the earnestness with which he spoke, consented, and the King, pouring clear, pure water over her hands, made her his Queen. He led her in a festive procession to his capital, Magama, where the whole populace of Ruhuna had assembled to greet her. They bowed down in love and reverence before this new Queen, who had all at once taken possession of their hearts, by her bravery and devotion and loveliness. The whole of Ruhuna rejoiced.

There, where Devi landed at Thattalutota in Ruhuna, King Kavan-Tissa built a Vihara in memory of her and she was called from that time by her loving subjects Vihara-Maha-Devi.

["That was a very pretty story, dear mother," cried the girls.

"Poor Vihara-Maha-Devi! how dreadful it must have been to get into that little boat.

when the waves were roaring and the storm was howling ! I am afraid, I would not have been so brave " said Malina.

" I would not either " cried Susina. I do not like to go in a boat, even when the water is quite calm."

" Oh, you little coward," said Somawattie ; " I have been on a large ship, and I was not afraid. I would like to go on the ocean, when the wind blows hard and I think it would be nice to be rocked to and fro."

" Well my little one " said the mother smilingly, " if you like, I will take you with me next time I make a sea-trip."

" Well ! if my own mother will let me," said Somawattie a little subdued ; for she had not thought that this question of *really* travelling on the ocean would ever come to her.

All the girls laughed and went happily to their studies thinking of beautiful Vihara-Maha-Devi and perhaps later on dreaming of her tossing about in her golden boat on the roaring sea.]

CHAPTER II.

THE QUEEN OF RUHUNA.

King Kavan-Tissa kept his word about sheltering and protecting the young Queen Vihara-Maha-Devi against all troubles. He

cherished and loved her, and her life as Queen of Ruhuna was a very happy one.

She was loved by everybody, for her whole life was devoted to the welfare of the poor and to religion.

Every day she used to feed many poor people and every day she sent the morning meal to one of the temples. Very often she went herself there, with flowers and medicines and clothing. So she lived on blessed by every-body.

Vihara-Maha-Devi had only one sorrow, and that was that she had no child, and she wished so much to have a son.

One day, while she was listening to the teachings of the Dharma, the chief priest turned to her and said, that she had attained to such an exalted position of prosperity, because she was so pious.

Vihara-Maha-Devi answered. "In what does this prosperity consist? I would only consider myself prosperous, if I had a son." "That prosperity also will come to you," said the high-priest, who foresaw that her wish would be fulfilled, "you will become the happy mother of a son."

Soon after this, Queen Vihara-Maha-Devi had three very peculiar dreams, which she related to the King, and which the King thought it worth while to get interpreted by a sage of his country. The dreams were as follows :—

The Queen was lying on a magnificent

couch, having for a pillow a huge honey-comb, so large that she could feed twelve-thousand priests with the honey in it.

The second dream was, that the head of King Elala's chief warrior was struck off by a sword and that she bathed in the water in which this sword was washed.

The third dream was that she was wearing a wreath of unfaded lotus-flowers from the famous lotus-tank in Anuradhapura.

When these dreams were told to the wise ones in Ruhuna their interpretation was as follows : " The Queen will become the mother of a son, who will be such a brave warrior, that he will destroy the power of the Tamils and will bring the whole of Lanka again under one Sovereign. The Buddha-Dharma will again become the " shining light of Lanka." " Take care, O King," they said, " that these dreams might become a reality."

So the King proclaimed by beat of drums that the person who could find as huge a honey-comb, as the Queen had seen in her dream, would be very richly rewarded.

The poor villagers in Ruhuna began to search everywhere and one of them was fortunate enough to find near the sea-shore an old *canoe*, upside down, and this canoe was filled with *honey*.

Full of gladness and in hopes of a very big reward, he reported his find to King Kavan-Tissa, who at once had a temporary building put up over the canoe. He took

Queen Vihara-Maha-Devi there and her first dream was fulfilled. She fed a great number of priests with this honey out of the canoe, and after their meal was over, partook of the remainder of it herself. That the poor villager became rich by the reward he received from the King, you may well believe!

You see, he loved his Queen so much, that he was only too glad to do anything he could for her.

Now the King very much wanted the other two dreams to be fulfilled too, and he sent one of his most faithful warriors to Anuradhapura for this purpose. It was rather a difficult task for King Kavan-Tissa's man, but he managed to do his work well.

Having reached Anuradhapura, he at once made friends with the groom of King Elala's best charger.

After he had made himself very useful to the groom, he gathered some lotus-flowers from the famous lotus-tank in Anuradhapura, procured a sword and hid them both near the river among the bushes.

Then he took King Elala's war horse to the river to drink, seized the hidden sword and the lotus-flowers, jumped on the horse's back and proclaimed with a loud voice his name and his intention to steal the horse. Then he galloped off seated on the charger's back.

King Elala, hearing this, sent his chief warrior on his second best charger after

the run-away, who had hidden himself in a neighbouring jungle.

When King Kavan-Tissa's man heard King Elalā's warrior galloping on very fast, he stepped into the road, drew his sword and held it high up across the road standing on that part of it where the warrior had to pass. The warrior was galloping on so fast, that, being unable to stop, he ran against the sharp sword and his head was at once cut off.

King Kavan-Tissa's man now captured the warrior's horse and brought the sword, the head of the warrior, the lotus-flowers and the two splendid horses to the King of Ruhuna.

Now the two other dreams of Queen Vihara-Maha-Devi were also fulfilled.

Soon after this, Queen Vihara-Maha-Devi became the mother of a lovely boy. The King and all his subjects rejoiced, and the Queen herself had great hopes that the prophecy about her son would be fulfilled, and that when he grew up, he would be strong and brave enough to drive away the Tamils and become King over the whole of Lanka. But her most earnest desire was that he should become a good Buddhist and make Buddhism again the only religion in Lanka.

[“ How wonderful those dreams were ” said Amarawattie thoughtfully “ I hope that the young prince will become a great ruler ! ”

“ I think I know who he was,” whispered

Mallika, "but I will not tell yet, as I am not quite sure."

"Come and whisper his name in my ear," said the mother, "I would like to know whether you are right."

Mallika gave the right name and was quite proud that she knew something of Ceylon History about which the mother had not yet spoken.

"Well girls" said the mother, "Mallika knows who this young Prince, Vihara-Maha-Devi's son is, and if you want to know his name to-night instead of to-morrow, you may ask her. To-morrow, I will tell you about him and how he spent his youth."]

STORY III.

DUTTU GEMUNU.

CHAPTER I.

THE YOUNG PRINCES.

King Kavan-Tissa, Queen Vihara-Maha-Devi and likewise all the people, expected something unusual from this Prince, for it happened that just on the very day of his birth, seven ships laden with treasure arrived in Ruhuna from different countries. This the people considered a very good omen.

Another thing happened the same day, which was also taken as a token, that the young prince would become a very powerful warrior. This was that one of the state-elephants had a young one, and left it in a thicket, near a pond, not far from the palace. The young elephant was found by a fisherman named Kandula, and when he reported his find to the King, the King sent the elephant catchers to bring it to the palace. King Kavan-Tissa gave this young elephant the name of "Kandula," because the fisherman Kandula had found it, and he said that it should be brought up for his son to become his war-elephant. You will hear more later on about this famous war-elephant Kandula.

The King gave the little prince the name of *Gemunu*. On the day of his name-giving there was a great festival and many priests and people were fed with milk-rice (*kiribat*) to celebrate the occasion.

After *Gemunu* was two years old, the Queen became the mother of another little son, who was named *Tissa*.

These two little boys grew up together and they were carefully watched and taught by their good and clever mother Queen *Vihara-Maha-Devi*. They became very attached to each other and when quite young they showed signs of great intelligence. But *Gemunu* was the braver and stronger of the two.

The mother often talked with him about the splendours of *Anuradhapura* and the little prince became very eager to see this beautiful city. He wondered why *they* did not live in *Anuradhapura*, which he had heard from his teachers was the *real* capital of *Lanka*. Queen *Devi* enjoyed answering these questions, for her secret and greatest wish always was, that her eldest son should become the sole ruler of the Island.

So *Gemunu* grew up with the understanding that his mother—who was to him the dearest person in this life—expected something great of him.

When the two young princes had reached the ages of twelve and ten years respectively, the King wanted to find out their characters.

He gave a feast to a great number of

priests, and when they had been fed, he gathered the remainder of their meal into a golden dish, called his two sons and divided the food into three portions.

Then he spoke thus: "My sons, eat this first portion of rice, promising me that you will never in all your lives injure the priesthood."

The two boys ate their rice with a great deal of pleasure, assuring their father that they certainly would never injure any priest as long as they lived

Then the father gave them the second portion of rice and asked them, to eat it, promising him always to live in friendship with each other. This second part they ate with the same pleasure.

Finally the father put the last portion of the rice before his boys, looked very solemn and said: "Now, my boys, I ask you, in eating this rice, to promise me faithfully, that you will *never* fight against the Tamils, who are now in possession of the greatest part of Lanka"

When the boys heard this, each of them scornfully threw the rice away and Gemunu especially was so indignant, that he left his father angrily and retired to his bed-room.

The Queen had watched her sons keenly, when this question had been put to them, and when she saw her eldest boy rushing out of the room angrily, with a dark scowl on his face, she followed him. He had thrown him-



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"My dear son, why do you not stretch out yourself comfortably in your bed?"

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self on his couch in his simple little room, and turned his angry face to the wall, drawing up his legs and arms to his body !

The Queen caressed him and asked him gently : “ My dear son, why do you not stretch out yourself comfortably in your bed ? ”

Very sadly Gemunu answered. “ My beloved mother, you who understand me so well ought to know without asking why I cannot feel any comfort, and why I do not want to be comfortable, till I have accomplished what lies before me.

“ The Tamils are pressing me on one side, beyond the Mahaveli-ganga, and on the other side the Gotha-sea* bears down on me ? How can I stretch myself out ! I want more room ! In fact I shall have room enough only when the whole Island is mine, and when Buddhism alone reigns supreme again.”

Vihara-Maha-Devi smiled and blessed her boy, who was beginning to show that he had understood her teachings !

When she told the King what her brave son Gemunu had said to her, he was speechless with surprise, fearing that this young boy would later on undertake something which would be beyond his strength, for he knew how brave and proud King Elala was, and that it would be a very difficult task to conquer him.

* “ *Golu-muda* ” (speechless-sea) in the Sinhalese version.

Thus the two Princes Gemunu and Tissa grew up to be promising young lads. Both were taught together in all the arts of learning and warfare. In addition to this the Queen was ever careful that they should be taught to honour religion before everything else.

["Oh, I love Gemunu very much," cried little Leelawattie with shining eyes "I am sure he will become a great hero, when he grows up. Now he is only twelve years old and already he talks so bravely, I can imagine how bravely he will fight later on."

"Well, dearie, ask Mallika," said the mother, "I think she knows a good deal about Gemunu."

"Please, dear mother," said the little girl pleadingly, "I would rather wait till you tell us all about it, because your stories are more interesting than Mallika's talks, I am sure."

"Allright, my little girl" answered the mother "then wait for my stories, but I hope you have not offended Mallika."

"Certainly not," said Mallika, "Leelawattie is quite right, I only know a little dull history, but you, dear mother, tell it all in such an interesting way that I love to listen and so do all the girls."

"Well then my children, to-morrow's story will be called "the ten giants." These giants will form the body-guard of our brave prince Gemunu."]

CHAPTER II.

THE TEN GIANTS.

From his sixteenth year Gemunu began his preparations for a great war against the Tamils, having always in his mind this *one* aim of conquering the whole of Lanka.

He had many private talks with his beloved mother, who had by this time almost become his companion. These talks made him more and more eager to grow up to fulfil her hopes. It was principally *she* who taught him to love her own religion, Buddhism, more than anything else, and who made him pledge his life to try to re-establish it in the Island.

You know, my children, that for more than sixty years, the Tamils had been coming and going, and coming again to Ceylon. They were not Buddhists, but Hindus, and so Buddhism was slowly losing its hold on the people, although some of the priests in Anuradhapura were trying hard to keep the Sinhalese firm in their belief.

King Elala himself, as I have told you, was a very good King, but his Tamil subjects, whom he had brought with him from India, naturally preferred their own religion, Hinduism, and tried to make the Sinhalese to go back to it. You know they had been Hindus in their religion before King Devanampiya-Tissa became a Buddhist and with him his subjects. The Tamils abused and constantly damaged the Buddhist buildings,

making the Sinhalese become very discontented.

In Anuradhapura itself, there lived at this time one very strong Sinhalese man; he was the nephew of one of King Elala's Ministers. This man, who was a faithful Buddhist, watched the Tamils very carefully and when they injured any of the sacred Buddhist buildings, he punished them by simply taking hold of the offenders, killing them and throwing their bodies into the jungle. In this way the Tamils visibly diminished and nobody could find out what became of them.

At last King Elala heard that this strong man, who was called *Nandimitta*, had killed them. He sent his army against him to capture him. But the soldiers could not catch him as he had hidden himself.

Nandimitta, however, saw that he could not kill *all* the Tamils in this way, so he made up his mind to go to Ruhuna, where he had heard that a good Buddhist King reigned and where there lived no Tamils.

He came to Magama, got admission to the palace and disclosed to Prince Gemunu his plan to kill all the Tamils and establish the Buddhist religion in Lanka again.

After consulting his mother, Gemunu took Nandimitta into his service. Nandimitta was really a very strong man, a giant in strength, and, even if Gemunu did not believe that Nandimitta was powerful enough alone to do what he wanted, he thought,

that if he could gather more such strong warriors around him, the purpose of his life might, with their help, be fulfilled in the course of time.

So Nandimitta was the first of the mighty warriors Gemunu gathered round him and soon a second one joined him. This was *Suranimila*, who could run so fast, that he could outdo any horse in speed. Gemunu had heard of him, and it is said that he tested his swiftness by sending him one morning many miles away to a village near Mihintale mountain, where Gemunu had a friend. He gave him a letter for this Brahmin friend and Suranimila went to Anuradhapura, bathed in the Tissa Tank, worshipped at the Bo-tree and Thuparama, called on the Brahmin with Gemunu's letter and returned to Ruhuna, doing all this before sunset in *one* day. Gemunu was so much pleased with this display of quickness, that he rewarded him richly and installed him as one of his attendants.

Then Gemunu heard of a young man, who had already been able in his seventh year, to pull up young palm-trees, and who, when he was ten years of age, could uproot full-grown cocoanut-palms. He became the third strong man of his body-guard and his name was *Maha-Sona*.

The fourth, *Gothayimbara*, had uprooted a portion of an Imbara forest all alone; and when Gemunu heard of this, he at once sent for him.

Then the prince received news of another strong youth called *Theraputabhaya*, who already in his twelfth year was able to toss about stones, which four or five men could not even lift. When he was sixteen years old he used to strike his huge staff against cocoanut-palms or palmyra-palms and fell them thus to the ground. By these feats of strength he became celebrated as a giant and King Kavan-Tissa sent him to his son Gemunu. He was the fifth warrior.

The sixth warrior was *Bharana*, who was so swift-footed that he could outstrip the birds and deer.

Soon the prince found out another youth named *Velusumana*, who was so strong that he had mastered his father's charger, which had never been mounted by anybody. He was almost a child when he jumped on this mighty animal's back and rode him round in a circle with such speed that there seemed to be one continuous horse in every part of the circle, just as when you whirl a lighted torch around you, you see a circle of light instead of one light. This skilful young man became the seventh of Gemunu's warriors.

The eighth, *Kanjadeva*, was lame in one of his feet, but he used to give chase to wild buffaloes and elk, and scared them by his dreadful shouts and seized them by the legs. Then, after whirling them round his head, he would dash them to the ground, breaking all their bones to pieces.

The ninth, *Phussadeva*, was a great acquisition for Gemunu, for he was a chank-blower, and a sound-and lightning-archer. That means that he could blow the war-blast on the war-chank so loud that it could be heard many miles away. He could shoot, guided by sound only, without looking at the object of his aim, and that too with such swiftness that his arrow would fly almost as fast as the lightning. With his arrow he could pierce an *Asoka*-wood plank (which is a very hard wood) several inches thick.

And now came the tenth warrior *Vasabha*, the handsome one, who at the building of a tank lifted baskets of earth, which could hardly be raised by ten or twelve stout labourers together.

Gemunu's father, King Kavan-Tissa, was much pleased with these ten strong men and to them he gave the same protection as to his sons. He noticed with pride and delight how his sons exercised their strength in warlike games with them.

Gemunu especially was getting stronger and more manly every day, making up sham-fights with the valiant soldiers of his body-guard.

But the happiest in the Royal house-hold was Queen Vihara-Maha-Devi, who already with her mind's eye saw Gemunu as the hero King of Lanka.

[“I would have liked to see these ten giants” said little Somawattie, “I wonder whether they were as tall as our house!”]

The bigger girls laughed heartily, when the little girl made this remark, so that she felt quite ashamed.

"Come here, my little one," said the mother, "never mind the big girls, they are naughty to laugh at you. I will answer your question."

"*Giants* are said to be very tall men, but they are not so tall as a house. Perhaps some of them were over six feet tall, but they were really giants more in *strength* than in *height* and we do not know how tall they were. So I think it would be better to call these ten men of prince Gemunu, 'The ten strong warriors,' so that other little girls will not think like my little Somawattie, that they were as tall as a house."

"To-morrow I will tell you why prince Gemunu received the name 'Duttu' and why he was 'undutiful' to his father King Kavan-Tissa and I shall be curious to know whether my girls will take *his* part or the part of the old King."]

CHAPTER III.

WHY GEMUNU RECEIVED THE NAME DUTTU-GEMUNU (THE UNDUTIFUL.)

King Kavan-Tissa called the ten strong warriors together and issued this command to them: "Let the ten warriors *each* enlist *ten* men."

Each of the warriors searched for ten men, who were to be taught warfare by them. When they had succeeded in finding suitable men, and had taught them the use of arms, each of these hundred men had also to search out ten men and so on, till a whole army was created of eleven-thousand-one-hundred-and-ten soldiers, who were drilled and exercised every day.

King Kavan-Tissa very gladly supported this whole brave army in Prince Gemunu's establishment in Magama, while the younger son Tissa had his place at Dighavapi, where he had been sent with a strong army, to protect the King's dominions against the invasions of the Tamils.

Gemunu was very proud of his strong army and worked hard to gain for himself great skill in all martial arts.

After a short time he and his gallant army were so well drilled, that Gemunu, after reviewing his troops, thought the time had come when he could venture to fight against King Elala, who still held the sceptre of Lanka in his strong hands.

So the Prince asked permission from his father to march to Anuradhapura and drive the Tamils away from Lanka.

King Kavan-Tissa however, fearing that Gemunu was not strong enough or old enough to fight against King Elala, who was a brave and experienced soldier, refused to give permission for the attack, and Gemunu much

grieved, gave up the idea for the time being, in obedience to his father's wish.

He continued to exercise his troops making himself and his army stronger and more fit to fight against any strong enemy.

After a while Gemunu again asked his father for permission to attack King Elala, and for the second time the King refused.

The Prince was getting impatient and yet he yielded to his father's command. But when, after another year's hard work, he got a *third* refusal from his father, he became so indignant, that he sent his father a woman's gold necklace with the words:—"My father cannot be a man, he must be a woman, therefore let him wear this woman's ornament."

Kavan-Tissa, who really loved his son, Gemunu dearly, but who was not as brave as his son and always feared that his son might be killed in the fight with Elala, grew angry and ordered that a gold chain should be made with which he might chain the young Prince, as he could not by any other means be kept in bounds.

Gemunu hearing this, fled to Kotmale where he remained till the death of his father, whom he did not see again. However, he kept in touch with his mother, who did not discourage him, as his father had done, but urged him to wait for a better time for his proposed war.

From this time onward however, Gemunu was called *Duttu* Gemunu, because he had been *undutiful* to his father.

Now Duttu-Gemunu's strong army remained with King Kavan-Tissa who was much afraid that, as his son Gemunu had left the court, there would be a struggle after his death between the two Princes; for the second son Tissa was now expecting to become King, and in order to prevent a big war King Kavan-Tissa made the strong army of Gemunu swear, in the presence of the whole priesthood, who had been called to celebrate the erection of the Mahanuggala Dagoba, that they would not take part in any war which might arise later on between the two brothers Gemunu and Tissa.

The soldiers took a solemn oath, and the King was quite sure, that they would keep it, as they had sworn in the presence of the Priesthood.

Soon after this, the old King Kavan-Tissa died and at once Tissa, his second son, came from Dighavapi, his residence, performed the funeral-rites for his father with great pomp (which ought to have been done by Gemunu), took charge of his mother and took possession of Gemunu's State-elephant, Kandula. Then fearing his brother's anger, he returned with his mother and the elephant to Dighavapi, to his own residence, and for the time being remained there.

[“ Dearest mother, you said last night, that you would be curious to know whether we girls would take Duttu-Gemunu's part, or his

father's part," said Jayanti. " I am afraid all of us would also be *undutiful* to our fathers, if we had been in Prince Gemunu's place. He was so well prepared to go to war, and then, only think, his dear mother, Vihara-Maha-Devi, had brought him up to be brave and to try to regain the whole of Lanka for the Sinhalese. I cannot help admiring Prince Gemunu very much ! Of course, it was not very nice of him to send that ' woman's ornament ' to his father ; but we must remember, that he had asked three times for permission to fight with King Elala, and no wonder he got impatient and angry."

" My dear children " said the mother, " I do not blame any of you for taking Gemunu's part, for I am afraid, I would have been just as impatient as the young prince was, to have that splendid city Anuradhapura back as the only Capital of Lanka and to be in possession of the whole of the Kingdom, if it had been mine by right."

" But why did not Prince Gemunu come, when he heard that his father was dead " ; asked Jayanti ?

" My dear child, he did not hear at once about his father's death, and so he could not come in time. I will tell you in the next Chapter, what happened after the old King's death."]



"Kandula . . . succeeded in shaking Prince Tissa off his back by brushing against a tree."
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CHAPTER IV.

WAR BETWEEN THE TWO PRINCES.

The Ministers of the late King Kavan-Tissa thought it was wrong of Prince Tissa to have failed to inform Prince Duttu-Gemunu of the death of their father and not to have let him, as the eldest son, attend to the funeral rites. So they sent a report of it to Prince Gemunu and asked him to come to Magama at once and take possession of the Throne.

Prince Gemunu came immediately and sent word to his brother Tissa to send their mother Vihara-Maha Devi as well as his elephant Kandula back to Magama.

Tissa refused this request *three times*, so that Gemunu lost his patience, for it was his right as the eldest son, to provide for his mother.

Now Gemunu collected an army, marched to Dighavapi and attacked his brother Tissa in his own province. You know, my children, Gemunu's *strong* army of eleven-thousand-one-hundred and ten men, were not allowed to fight as they had promised the old King Kavan-Tissa before his death, and so Gemunu had to collect another army. This new army was not so strong as Prince Tissa's army and Duttu-Gemunu was defeated by his brother and had to flee.

Prince Tissa pursued his brother, but as he was riding Gemunu's State-elephant Kandula, this animal succeeded in shaking Prince Tissa off his back by brushing against a tree.

The elephant Kandula did this because he knew who his real master was and he would not fight against him. As soon as the elephant threw off Prince Tissa from his back, he ran away to his own master Gemunu, who, very much pleased, mounted at once on its back.

So Prince Tissa had now to flee.

He came to a Vihara, ran inside and hid himself under the bed of one of the Monks. Gemunu seeing his brother's foot prints, ending before the Vihara, asked the Monk where his brother was. The answer came reluctantly from the Monk, "not *on* my bed."

Gemunu at once understood that the Prince had hid himself *under* the Monk's bed. Now Gemunu did not enter the Monk's room, but he left the Vihara and had it guarded from the outside.

Then the Monk, covering Prince Tissa with a robe, as if he were a corpse, had him carried out on a couch by four young Monks.

But Gemunu could not be deceived. He knew at once that it was his brother, who was being carried out, and he called out: "Tissa, do not fear, that I will take away from the Priests, what they protect. But never forget that *they* have saved your life."

After this Gemunu gave up the persecution of his brother, returned to Magama, sent for his mother Vihara-Maha-Devi, and paid her all the honours that were due to her as the mother of the reigning King and gave her all the love that he felt for her as his mother.

After this, Prince Tissa became very much ashamed of what he had done. He put on plain clothes and returned to Dighavapi, imploring one of the High-Priests there to get him the forgiveness of his brother.

This Priest promised to undertake this mission and started at once on his way, to Magama. He took with him Prince Tissa, who in disguise, had to put on the robes of a Samanera-Priest.

Arrived in Magama, the High-Priest from Dighavapi, entered the palace of Duttu-Gemunu with his disciples, leaving Prince Tissa in his disguise, at the foot of the entrance steps to the palace. King Duttu Gemunu and his mother Vihara-Maha-Devi, offered food to all the priests, who had gathered in the palace and he was quite astonished, when he saw that the High-Priest covered his bowl with his cloth, as a sign that he would not eat his food.

When the King asked the reason why he would not accept food from him, the Priest answered: "When you have forgiven your brother Tissa, who is with me, then I will accept your gift."

"Where is the traitor?" called out Gemunu, when he heard that his brother was near. He was told that he was waiting at the foot of the entrance steps, and everybody thought, that Gemunu would go out to him and kill him. Even his mother feared for her second son's life and rushed down to the steps and put her arms round him for protection.

But what did Gemunu do? He turned to the Chief-Priest and said gently: "Why have you not sent a small Samanera Priest to me to ask pardon for my brother? Had you done so this war between us would not have taken place and so much blood would not have been shed. Do you not yet know, that I am like a slave to you?"

Then he himself conducted his brother Tissa into the hall, embraced him and as a sign of reconciliation, ate out of the same dish with him in the presence of all the assembled Priests.

After the reconciliation of the two brothers had been duly celebrated, King Duttu-Gemunu sent his brother Tissa back to his own province, Dighavapi, to attend to agricultural work, and he himself supervised the tilling of the fields in his Kingdom Ruhuna, as it had been neglected during the conflict between the two brothers. He wanted his country to recover as much as possible from all disturbances, before he started on the great war with the Tamils, for which he had deliberately trained himself. So for a while he became a real father to his people in Ruhuna, working with them and for them, till the Ruhuna District had regained its fertility.

Only then he made his final preparations for the great struggle with King Elala, through which he wanted to re-unite the powers of Lanka under one head.

"What a good King Duttu-Gemunu was and how pious! How happy his mother Vihara-

Maha-Devi must have been to see that he forgave his younger brother Tissa for all his wrong doings," said Mangala.

"I hope he was rewarded for his goodness by becoming sole ruler in Lanka, and being able to restore Anuradhapura to its glory, as it was in King Tissa's time," said Jayaseeli.

"Well, you will see soon, whether he succeeds or not" answered the mother. "I will speak about the war to-morrow."

"Please dear mother, I would like to ask a question," said Anula. "You have mentioned several times the name 'Samanera' What kind of Priest is a Samanera Priest?"

"A Samanera-Priest is a Priest who has not yet had his full ordination. Only when a Priest has been Samanera for a number of years, can he become a full priest. Sometimes Priests remain Samaneras all their lives."

"To-morrow, my dear children, we come to King Duttu-Gemunu's great war with the Tamil King Elala, of whom you heard from me quite a while ago. I mean that same King Elala, who was so very just and who had a justice bell put up. He had reigned in Lanka for a long time, forty-four years, and it was King Duttu-Gemunu who succeeded in subduing him."

CHAPTER V.

KING DUTTU-GEMUNU MAKES WAR
AGAINST KING ELALA.

I will not tire you, my children, with an account of all the battles fought between Gemunu and the Tamils. But I must tell you that Duttu-Gemunu's ten strong men as well as his faithful elephant Kandula did marvels of bravery.

It was almost a triumphal march which Gemunu made up to Vijita, where all the Tamil chiefs had collected, who had escaped from the first battles which Gemunu fought with them. In Vijita especially, the strong men and the state-elephant Kandula showed their enormous strength.

Kandula was almost burnt to death by molten lead, poured on his back by the Tamils, from the rampart of this besieged city. The poor tortured animal had to rush into a pond, to cool the dreadful wounds he had received. But afterwards the King had him attended to by a Doctor for animals or Veterinary Surgeon and had buffalo hides tied on his back, seven layers thick. Thus protected, Kandula rushed at the strongest of the enormous iron gates of the city and burst it in. Thereby he pulled down the tower, which was on the top of the side columns and if it had not been for the help of Nandimitta, who pushed with his enormous strength the falling tower towards the city, poor Kandula would have

been crushed to death by the falling tower. For this help Kandula was so grateful, that he always protected Nandimitta, whenever he was in danger, as long as they went to war together, side by side, like good comrades.

It was four months before Duttu-Gemunu finally took possession of Vijita. But after it was taken, he marched with his victorious army to Anuradhapura.

Arrived there, the question came how to take possession of this enormous city, which was so large that Duttu-Gemunu's army could not besiege it in a regular way. Queen Vihara-Maha-Devi thought out a plan, which was accepted. She had accompanied her son during the whole war and they had always counselled together, and Duttu-Gemunu had the greatest confidence in her advice even in warfare. The Queen-mother advised her son to have thirty-two ramparts built, before the strongest gate of Anuradhapura and to entrench themselves behind these earth-walls. Thus, she said, pretending weakness, instead of assuming the offensive, they would invite attack from the Tamils in the city.

They really were not numerous enough to encircle the large city and she thought this was the best way to succeed in making the Tamils come out to attack them.

Vihara-Maha-Devi made Duttu-Gemunu put up a sham figure on each of these ramparts, representing the King, with a dummy standard-bearer at his side; while the King

himself remained in an inner fortification. This stratagem was a splendid success!

The Tamils attacked the first rampart and took it, thinking that they had captured the King, when they reached the top of it, while the Sinhalese retired without much fighting to the second rampart. The same happened with the other ramparts. The Tamils were tiring themselves out, climbing and taking possession of the different ramparts, with the sham figure and its sham standard-bearer, which were always attired differently and put in a different place on each rampart, enticing them forward with the hope that at last they had captured King Duttu-Gemunu.

The Sinhalese soldiers steadily retired and left the Tamils in possession of the ramparts, till they came to the last one, where King Duttu-Gemunu and his strong men actually were. King Elala and his tired-out Tamil soldiers now thought that they had almost conquered the Sinhalese, as they had so easily taken possession of thirty one ramparts; but he was sadly mistaken. While he was collecting his warriors for a last attack, King Duttu-Gemunu appeared with his strong warriors and the chief archer of Lanka, Pussadeva, sounded his war-chank so loud, that the Tamils fled in terror, for they had never heard such a powerful war-blast. King Elala called his soldiers together, but they were so tired and so frightened that their courage was lost, and many were slain. And after the chief warrior of King Duttu-Gemunu had killed King Elala's best



" Mounted on their state elephants the two Monarchs . . . met in single combat near the Southern gate of Anuradhapura.
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leader, the Tamil soldiers gave up hope altogether.

When King Duttu-Gemunu saw this, he stopped his soldiers from pursuing the enemy and proclaimed by beat of drum that he wished to decide the war by a single combat with King Elala.

King Elala accepted this challenge and now a most remarkable fight began.

Mounted on their state-elephants the two monarchs, both great heroes, met in single combat near the Southern gate of Anuradhapura. All other fighting stopped and the two armies looked on in admiration at the combat, which was carried on between the two heroes, who seemed well matched in strength and skill.

Long did this conflict continue, but at last Gemunu and his Kandula, killed both Elala and his state-elephant Parwatha. The great hero Elala and his elephant, fell down dead together!

The war was ended!

Duttu-Gemunu had won back Lanka for the Sinhalese and Buddhism.

He was happy in this twofold victory, but he did not forget to honour his fallen enemy, by acknowledging his bravery and goodness.

He had King Elala's body cremated where he fell, with all the honours due to a King and a brave soldier.

A monument was erected over his ashes, and Duttu-Gemunu proclaimed that Elala's grave should be honoured by every-body.

He ordered that anyone riding or driving near it should dismount and pass it on foot and that when a procession came near it, all music should stop.

These honours continued to be paid to the grave of the Tamil King Elala even up to the period of the British occupation of the Kandyan territory about 1815 A. D.

["How exciting," called out the girls.

"Were all the Tamils driven away then?" asked Leelawattie.

"Well, my child, many of the Tamils had been killed in the war, and most of the remainder returned to India. The few who remained in Ceylon, settled down peacefully among the Sinhalese.

Later on, it is recorded in History, that the Tamils returned as enemies several times and I have to tell you more about the Tamil invasions."]

CHAPTER VI.

KING DUTTU-GEMUNU.

Now Gemunu was sole Sovereign over Lanka. The Sinhalese Dynasty was restored and all the people in Lanka were happy to have such a hero King. One more struggle he

had with the Tamils soon after King Elala's death. But he soon conquered the General who had come over to try to reconquer Lanka, and after that the Tamils did not trouble King Duttu-Gemunu again. The rest of his reign was undisturbed by warfare.

King Duttu-Gemunu rewarded all his faithful warriors in royal fashion and he provided for the widows and orphans of the fallen. He was deeply affected, thinking of all the blood which had been shed and during the remainder of his life he tried to live only for the welfare of his people and for the restoration of the Buddhist religion in Lanka.

He built hospitals for the sick, and homes for the old, who had lost their supporters by the war. He protected and helped agriculture and he commenced the building of the wonderful Dagobas and Temples, the ruins of which even to this day astonish the traveller.

I must tell you my children, how the Mirisweti Dagoba was built as it is quite interesting.

King Duttu-Gemunu was one day celebrating a water-festival at the Tissavewa-tank. He had his sceptre (in which a small relic of the Buddha had been enshrined before he went to the war with King Elala) stuck into the ground, surrounded by the spears of his followers. All were in the meantime enjoying themselves in the tank taking part in sports. When they were ready to go back to Anuradhapura, the King ordered the sceptre

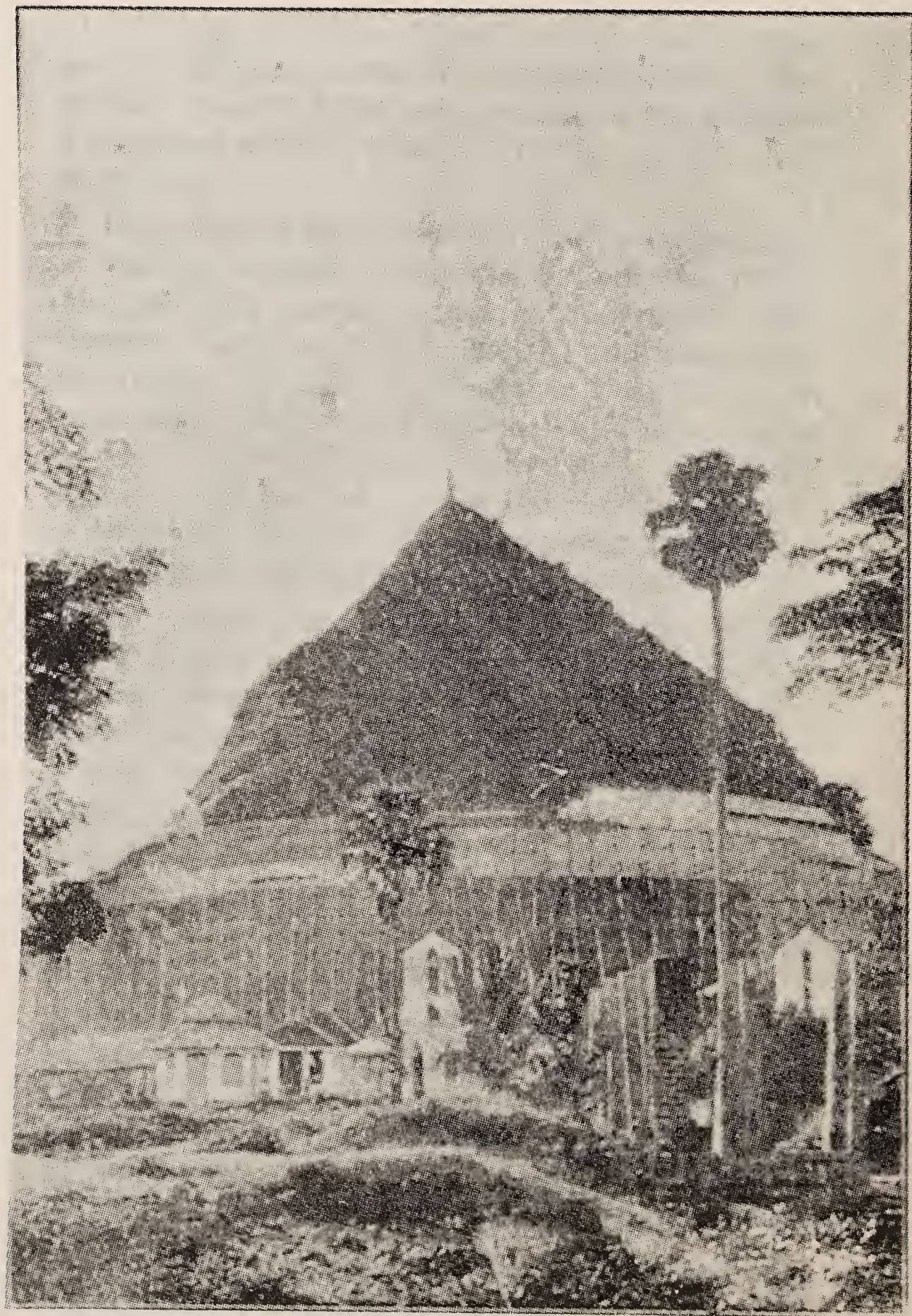
and the spears to be taken up and the sceptre to be carried before him in procession. But nobody could lift the sceptre out of the ground. It seemed to have grown into the earth ! All wondered !

But the King took this as a sign that a sacred building ought to be erected there. He left the sceptre, had it decorated with flowers, kept a guard near it and very soon he began to build a Dagoba over it, which was called Mirisweti Dagoba, built in memory of the immovable sceptre and as a reminder to him, that he had once eaten a chilly (Miris) without thinking of his vow never to eat any food before offering some of it to a priest.

The two largest sacred buildings which King Duttu-Gemunu erected, were the Lowa-Maha-Paya or Brazen Palace and the Ruanweli Dagoba or Maha-Thupa.

The Brazen Palace was built nine stories high, resting on one thousand six hundred pillars and it had one thousand rooms in it for the use of the monks in Anuradhapura. It was so magnificent that none of the buildings in olden times equalled it.

The roof of this huge monastery was of sheet copper, and shone in the sun, almost like gold. The walls were covered with gems and the great hall, in which stood a throne of ivory with a canopy of embroidered white cloth, was supported on golden pillars resting on lions. The pillars were connected with one another by wreaths of golden leaves in which were set flowers, made of jewels.



Ruanweli Dagoba, (as it is now)

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In this Palace Duttu-Gemunu used to sit on the ivory throne and hold council, surrounded by the one thousand monks living in the Lowa-Maha-Paya.

Sitting on his magnificent state-elephant Kandula, which was covered with red cloth, embroidered with gold, he used to head the procession going to this Brazen Palace. The beating of a number of drums announced the coming of the King to the monks and people gathered together. It was a magnificent sight, as you children can imagine.

About the building of the *Ruanweli Dagoba*, I must also tell you something, my children, for, a great many wonderful things are said to have occurred to make it possible for King Duttu-Gemunu to undertake such an enormous building, in which millions of tons of bricks were used.

You see, during King Tissa's reign, the great preacher Mahinda had prophesied, that a King with the name of Gemunu, would build a large Dagoba in the Mahamegha-Garden and the column, on which this prophecy was inscribed was found and so King Duttu-Gemunu became anxious to fulfil this prophecy.

Through the war the people had become poor, and he did not want them to do Rajakariah (work for the King without pay) and he himself had not enough money to procure all the materials and pay the people also. He was very eager to build, but wondered how he could do it. Then the Devas came to his help!

A hunter chasing an *iguana*, found ready-made bricks, which had been made by the Deva-Architect Vishmakarma. Near a village, gold was found. On the banks of the Mahaveli-Ganga a copper mine was discovered. In another village gems came to the surface of the ground. Silver was found in a cave. Coral and pearl-beds rose out of the ocean, and four superb gems of immense value were found. All these different treasures were brought to King Duttu-Gemunu on the same day.

Now he could commence the building of the great Dagoba !

The foundation was dug one hundred feet deep and elephants whose feet were protected by leathern cases, had to trample down the stones. Bricks and cement and even iron and silver girders were used and the foundation was laid so strongly that the wear and tear of centuries could not injure it.

When this was finished a great festival was celebrated and the King himself drew a circle with a silver compass to describe the circumference of the base of the Great Thupa and he laid the first stone in fine fragrant cement on the Eastern side.

Now the building of the Thupa began. It was to be two hundred and seventy feet high, measured from the terraces.

In the relic chamber a beautifully made Bo-tree of gold was placed, the leaves glittered with jewels and the roots were made of coral,

resting on an emerald ground. On a golden throne, under the Bo-tree, a statue of the Buddha was placed, made of pure gold. Around it, were many figures of Devas and plants with flowers made of jewels. Many more things besides were placed in the relic chamber, which I will not enumerate here.

The relics for this Dagoba were procured through a pious Samanera-Priest from a Naga-King, who had found them in the river Ganges in India, drifted there after the destruction of the Dagoba in which Kings of Ramagrama had enshrined them.

The Mahavansa (the old Ceylon History) says that these relics proved to be genuine, for by lifting themselves up in the air, the relics displayed the two-fold miracle of fire and water streaming forth from them at the same time.

When the Ruanweli Dagoba was almost completed, only the construction of the spire and the plastering of the Thupa remaining to be done, King Duttu-Gemunu fell seriously ill.

His brother Prince Tissa had the Dagoba temporarily finished with a bamboo-spire and a mantle of white cloth round it, so that the King should imagine how it would look when it would be entirely completed, as he was not likely to live long enough to complete it himself.

King Duttu-Gemunu was carried in solemn procession in a palanquin round the Thupa three times, bowing his head to it. Then

he was laid down on a carpet between his two greatest works the Brazen-Palace and the Ruanweli Dagoba. After he had listened to the recital of his greatest deeds, he looked once more on these two grand monuments, asked his younger brother Tissa to complete what remained to be done on the Dagoba, and then the hero-King passed away under the blessings and wailings of the priesthood and his assembled subjects.

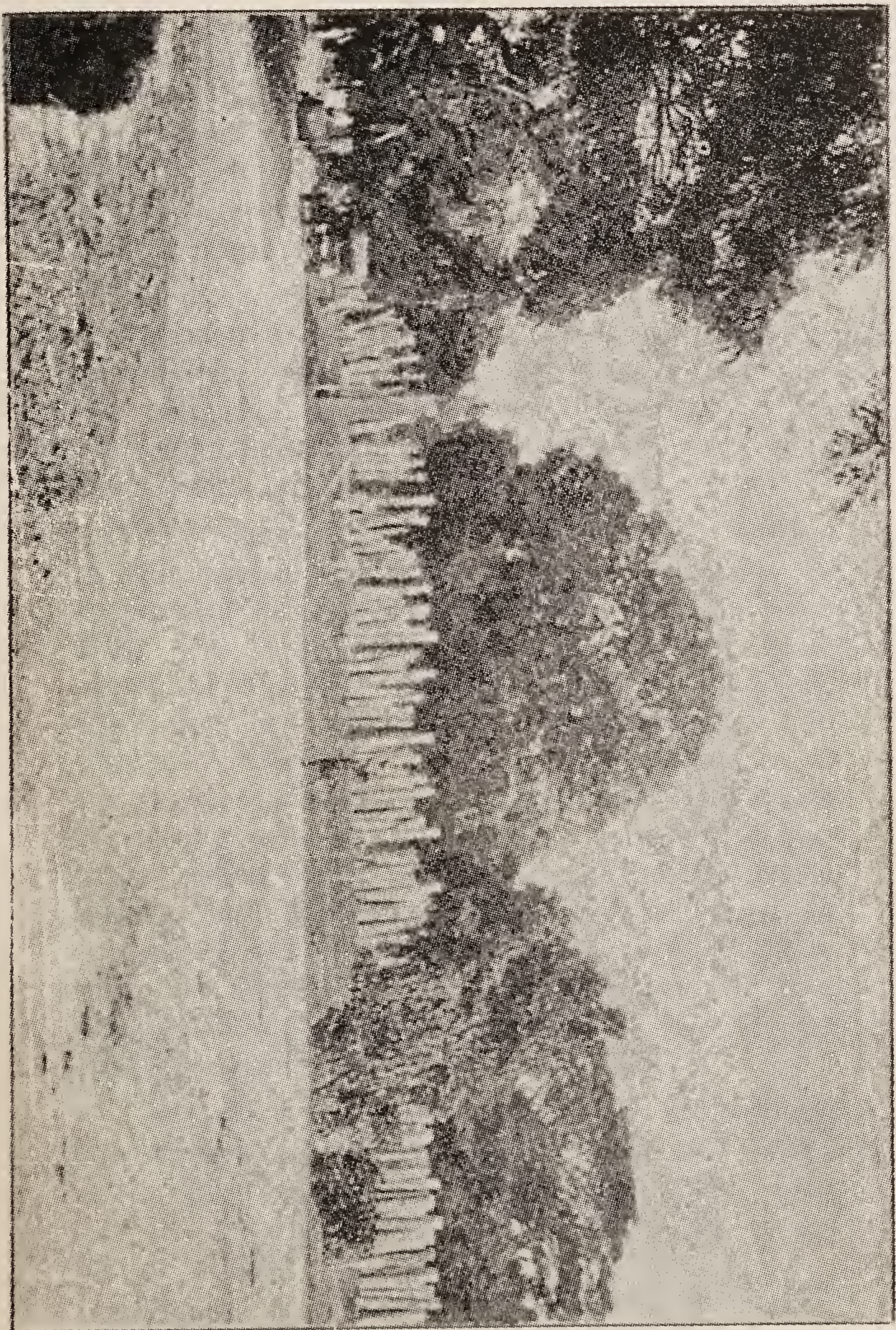
Duttu-Gemunu had become, from a hero of war, a hero of religion ; and the whole of Lanka was full of sadness, when their great King left his mortal body.

His brother Tissa, (called Seditissa) became his successor. He completed the Ruanweli Dagoba, which was plastered with chunam, and polished so beautifully, that it looked like white marble.

Seditissa was a good, pious King and built many smaller Dagobas, but he was not as great a King as his brother Duttu-Gemunu had been.

[“How strange,” said Yasodhara thoughtfully, when the story was finished, “that our two greatest Kings, Tissa and Duttu-Gemunu had no sons, and that their younger brothers had to succeed them on the throne !”

“But my dear child,” answered the mother, “both *had* sons. Only that they did not



What remains of the Brazen Palace.

(To face page 54.)

become the *successors* of their fathers. You remember that the little son of King Tissa was poisoned by a mango and to-morrow I will tell you the history of prince Sali, Duttu-Gemunu's only son, and why he could not become his father's successor to the throne."

"Please dear mother, explain to us what a relic is, we are not quite sure whether we understand the real meaning," said Premawattie, speaking for some bigger girls, who had been anxious to ask this question.

"My dear girls," said the mother, "relics in this instance, are little pieces of bones or a portion of the ashes which are left over after the body of a holy person has been cremated or burnt to ashes. Here in Ceylon, the relics are naturally the remainders of the cremated body of the Lord Buddha or of his greatest disciples. Do you not remember the story how King Tissa had procured the right collar-bone-relic of the Buddha from Sakka the King of the Nagas and had it enshrined in the Thuparama, the first Dagoba built in Ceylon? At the building of the Ruanweli-Dagoba, several small relics of the Buddha were enshrined."

"In other countries, they have relics from the bodies of very pious people and these relics they venerate. Sometimes, they also call things which have belonged to very pious people relics."

"Thank you very much dear mother, now we understand."

“Please mother dear, tell me, are not the ruins of the Ruanweli-Dagoba and the columns still standing in Anuradhapura, the ruins of the buildings King Duttu-Gemunu put up, of whom you have just now spoken?” asked Jayanti.

“Yes my child! The Ruanweli-Dagoba and the ruins of the Brazen Palace speak to us yet of the great King Duttu-Gemunu. Of the Brazen Palace only one thousand columns are standing, but the Ruanweli-Dagoba is now being repaired and I hope that in a few years it will show again in white stately grandeur. It was till very lately all covered with jungle, but now the jungle, is being removed and the outer brick covering restored. I will show you some pictures of the ruins when we next have a lantern-show.”

“But now to work my dear girls! we have spent rather a long time together to-night.”

“But it was a very nice time, thank you very much” said the girls and quickly they ran away to their studies.

When the bigger girls had left, little Somawattie, (the inquisitive little sage) came running to the mother and whispered to her: “Dear mother; I did not like to ask you while the big girls were there, as they always laugh when I ask questions; that is why I come now. Please tell me, is a Dagoba always quite closed up, so that one cannot go into it?”

“My dear little girl,” answered the mother, “you must not be ashamed to ask questions

when the bigger girls are there, and if, when they laugh, you feel unhappy, I will tell them not to laugh.

“ I will always answer your questions with a great deal of pleasure, and as your present question is one which ought to be answered when the other girls are present, for I expect that there will be more girls who do not exactly know what a Dagoba is, I will speak to all of you about it to-morrow night.

“ But now run away little one, because it is quite late and you must go to bed soon.”]

[The next evening, when the girls had gathered round their mother again, they all looked quite expectantly towards her, for little Somawattie had told them that *her* question which she put the night before when the other girls had left, would be considered specially to-night.

The mother smiled, for she knew that Somawattie had said something about it to the girls, and that the little girl herself felt very important to-night.

The mother began “ My children, before I tell you the story of King Duttu-Gemunu’s son Sali, I have to answer a question, which was brought to me last night. I thought it better to answer it when you were all here, because there might be some other girls.

whose minds are not quite clear about what really a Dagoba is !

“Suppose I ask one of the older girls to tell us, how a Dagoba is constructed? Jayanti please give us your idea about it!”

Jayanti got up very reluctantly and said “Dear mother, I will tell you what I understand, as you wish me to do so, but I am afraid, I can give but a poor description. A Dagoba is a bell-shaped building, generally standing on two platforms, a square and a round one. The Thupa, as it is also called, is built of stones or bricks and only a small room or shrine is in the middle of it in which relics are kept. Therefore this is called the relic chamber. It is closed up, after the relics are put into it and nobody can get into the Dagoba, because it is walled round and has no door.”

“That was quite nicely explained Jayanti and I will only add a few more words,” said the mother.

“It is thought that there might sometimes be a secret entrance, into certain Dagobas only known to the High-Priest of the Dagoba. Anyhow history says, that later on a King with the name of ‘Bhatiya,’ who was very pious, did not rest till he was allowed to enter the relic-chamber of the Ruanweli-Dagoba. And it is said also he was the only *King* who ever got the permission to go inside. *This* shows that there must have been a secret entrance to the Ruanweli-Dagoba. Whether this story is true or not, I cannot say.

The same King Bhatiya once covered this Dagoba entirely with flowers and had these flowers watered by machinery from the Abhaya Tank. What a beautiful sight that must have been! A mountain of sweet smelling flowers, just picture it to yourselves children!

A statue of the same King is still found on the ruined platform of the Ruanweli Dagoba. And the people tell the story of his entrance into the relic chamber.

How large this Dagoba was, you may imagine my children, when I tell you that it had two platforms round it, one square one, each side of which was three hundred feet long, and one round one, which was one hundred feet in diameter. The four entrances to the platforms of the Dagoba were large enough to allow elephants to enter, and great processions used to be going round the Dagoba. On the lower platform there used to stand many buildings. Some were dwelling-houses of the monks, attached to the Dagoba and some were chapels in which statues of the Buddha and the Kings were placed. The Ruanweli Dagoba with the buildings belonging to it, were almost like a little village and had a great number of priests attached to it. All was enclosed by a wall. Every Dagoba has a square of masonry on the top of the bell and than on the top of the masonry a spire.

“ I am telling you all this, so that you may get a little idea of what Dagobas are. Later on more, and even larger, Dagobas were built,

for instance the Abhayagiri Dagoba and the Jetavanarama Dagoba !

“ But my dear children I see, we have been building Dagobas too long to-night and we must wait for our story till to-morrow.”]

STORY IV.

WHY PRINCE SALI COULD NOT
BECOME KING.

CHAPTER I.

ASOKA MALA.

King Duttu-Gemunu had an only son, whom he loved very much. He was a good and pious boy and the King had great hopes that he would become his worthy successor.

He was not brought up to love war so much as Duttu-Gemunu himself, for, when he was born, the King had already given up fighting, and he did not want his son to love war too much, because war always brings so much blood-shed, as you all know. The young Prince grew up in very pious surroundings and he became a devoted Buddhist. He loved going to the temples and roaming about in the beautiful neighbouring jungles of Anuradhapura. He became a great lover of nature, and for hours he used to dream under the trees in the parks or jungles. He loved music also.

One morning, Prince Sali was in specially good spirits, for the air was balmy and the beautiful trees in the palace gardens looked so fresh and green and the flowers shone out in their yellow, red, white and blue colours after the recent rains. The birds sang so

sweetly in the leafy branches and the squirrels chased each other up and down the trees, squeaking with delight, while they flourished their bushy tails. Even the green lizards were enjoying the sweet air and were solemnly nodding at Prince Sali, as he stood quite still under a large tamarind tree, watching the busy life round him.

Everything in nature seemed so happy and contented and glorious, how could he help being peacefully happy too?

So he thought he would go into the jungle and enjoy himself with nature. He was without an attendant, as he wanted to be alone with his thoughts. So he entered a neighbouring jungle! Deeper and deeper he plunged into the green of the woods. The sun just glanced here and there through the wide spreading branches of the banyan, tamarind, ebony and other trees. He felt so joyous and happy! Everything was still and solemn round him!

Prince Sali threw himself down under a satin-wood tree thinking how glorious was everything and how happy life was.

So he lay dreaming for a while; when he was roused in hearing, not far from him, a melodious voice singing a low sweet song. It was almost like a whisper of love. He could not understand the words, but he knew that the singer must either be a child or a young woman.

At first he did not care to find out who the

singer was, as he was quite contented to enjoy the music of the song. But there was something so strangely attractive in the sweet voice, that he crept nearer and nearer, till he could find out who the singer was.

There, under an Asoka tree stood a maiden, so young and beautiful, that he at first thought she could be none but a goddess or a Devi, as a mere *woman* could hardly be so fair. With a simple white cloth draped round her, her raven hair falling down almost to her feet, her arms and feet bare. There she stood with just one bright ray of sun playing on the golden Asoka-flowers, which she wore on her head like a crown. Her skin shone like the gold of the sun and her eyes with the brilliancy of the black diamond. These marvellous eyes were shaded by long silken eye-lashes. With one arm outstretched to pluck some more flowers, sweetly singing to the Devi in the tree for permission to take some more flowers, she stood like a vision of love and beauty before Prince Sali.

Thus he saw her first, the beautiful flower of the forest, called Asoka-Mala,* by the people of her village.

Prince Sali was so struck with the beauty of this girl, that he would not move, fearing that she might disappear.

Then she seemed ready to go away, and when she turned, her beautiful eyes fell on the

* Asoka-Mala means Asoka-flower. The Asoka-tree has beautiful light-yellow flowers.

Prince, who was standing almost spellbound near the Asoka tree.

With a little scream of fright Asoka-Mala turned to run away. But Prince Sali, afraid of losing her altogether, called after her beseechingly: "Stay, Oh stay! Devi of the jungle: Do not leave me eternally longing after Thee!"

She looked at him so pleadingly, so bewilderingly, when he stretched out his hands to touch her, that he stood aside. Then she said: "Do not touch me, do not speak to me! I am a low-caste girl and you will lose your caste, by even talking to me. Let me go back to my village, which is quite near and forget that you ever saw poor Asoka-Mala.—With these words she turned and fled!

But Prince Sali would not let her go. He followed her and just when she was about to leave the jungle, he caught her gently by the hand and made her stop.

"Whoever thou art," Prince Sali cried, "whether woman or Devi, I cannot live without thee. Thy beauty has taken me a prisoner and my heart beats only for thee. Oh sweet jungle-flower, be mine!"

She looked at him again and her eyes shone even more bewitchingly than before on account of the tears in them. "Whoever you are, gentle pleader," she answered, "leave, oh! leave me, for I am not worthy of your love! I am only a poor girl of the Chandala

village* and whoever touches me will be an out-cast also.

Again she tried to escape from Prince Sali, who would not let her go, but was willing even to forego his throne for her sake if necessary.

Not letting her hand go, he entered with her the Chandala village, where a great commotion was created, when the beauty of the village entered hand in hand with a handsome youth, apparently of high caste.

Here, in the middle of the village, Prince Sali declared, that nobody else but Asoka-Mala should become his wife and before all the Chandalas he swore to be faithful to her.

For fear of losing her yet, after she would find out who he really was, he asked to stay in the village and marry her at once.

Prince Sali was so earnest in his request, that the village-people yielded and Asoka-Mala and Prince Sali were married the same day and lived in a simple hut in the Chandala-village.

CHAPTER II.

PRINCE SALI GIVES UP THE THRONE.

Prince Sali was so happy in his love, that he had forgotten his father and mother, and the palace and everything else.

* Chandalas are out-casts.

King Duttu-Gemunu wondered what had become of his son, who had not returned from his morning stroll. But as he knew that his son was sometimes away for a day, roaming around in the woods and visiting distant temples, he did not worry. But when one day after the other passed without any news from him, the King began to fear that some accident had happened to his son. He sent out a number of attendants to search everywhere for his son and at last one of the ministers found Prince Sali in the jungle, sitting under an Asoka-tree with a beautiful woman, dressed in white, with a wreath of golden Asoka flowers on her head, singing to him. "Surely she must be a goddess from the Thawtisaheaven" thought the minister, "for *earthly* woman cannot be as lovely as she is."

The minister stood silently and looked and wondered. At last, bowing low before Prince Sali, he begged him to come back to his father, who was anxious about him.

"Tell my father, the King," answered Prince Sali, "that I cannot come back to the palace, as I have found a palace and a queen, worth more to me than anything else."

Frightened by all this, for Asoka-Mala had not known till now, that Sali was the son of King Duttu-Gemunu, she pleaded with him to let her go and return to the King. But Prince Sali loved his low-caste wife too much, and he would not leave her. He sent word by the Minister to King Duttu-Gemunu to

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"Tell my father the King, answered Prince Shii, that I have found a Palace and a Queen...."

(To face page 66.)



appoint another successor to the throne, for he would not give up his wife even for a Kingdom.

How disappointed the Minister was to have to bring such a message to King Duttu-Gemunu, you may imagine, my children! Now what do you think the King did?

He was at first very indignant, when the minister brought him the message from his son and he asked him, whether he had seen the woman, who had turned his son's heart and mind against everything.

The Minister, although an old man, answered the King. "Oh King, she is so beautiful, that even a god would fall in love with her."

Now the old King became very curious to see this wonderful woman, who was worth more than a Kingdom and he sent word to Prince Sali, that he and his attendants would come and pay him a visit.

Prince Sali now had a hall built quickly of bamboos and cocoanut-leaves. He decorated it with flowers and had a throne improvised for his father. He did not dare to have any food prepared for him, for you know the King could not very well eat with a Chandala-woman, without lowering himself in the eyes of his subjects.

So King Duttu-Gemunu really came to pay a visit to his son, Prince Sali. At first, when he arrived, he had a deep scowl on his face and he commanded his son rather crossly,

“show me the woman, who is worth more than a Kingdom.”

Prince Sali knelt down before his father and asked his forgiveness, saying, that his wife was so dear to him, that not even his father's scorn would make him give her up.

Then Asoka-Mala was brought in, just dressed as usual in a simple white *sari* adorned with nothing but her own beauty and some yellow Asoka-flowers. Casting one pleading, anxious look, on the old King and falling down at his feet, she told him, that she had not known who Prince Sali was and that she would never have consented to become his wife, if she had been aware that he would have to renounce his claim to the throne for her sake.

“Take him back to the palace,” she cried in agony, lifting her glorious eyes to the old King, I have been, oh so happy these few days, and I could not live without him; but what matters the death of a low woman as I am? Take him back oh, King! if he can be happy without me!”

The old King looked at her and then at his son. He saw despair in the eyes of both. She was so beautiful and she looked so pure and innocent, that his heart melted in him. Yes, she was almost a goddess in beauty and she was good also.

“Art thou willing my son,” the old King said solemnly, “to give up everything for the sake of this beautiful woman? Dost thou

know, what it means to remain faithful to her? Even if I, the King, wanted thee to remain as my heir and my successor on the throne, I could not do so, thou knowest that. But I, *as thy father*, forgive thee, for Asoka-Mala is a treasure?"

Sali, taking Asoka-Mala's two hands in his threw himself with her at the King's feet and said solemnly: "My father, if *you* forgive me I am entirely satisfied, for my wife is more to me than throne and crown."

"Well, my children," the old King said and a big tear stood in his eye, "prepare a feast and I and my attendants will come and be present at your *second* marriage festival, to be solemnised before my eyes and sanctioned by me."

How happy Prince Sali and his sweet Asoka-Mala were, you can hardly imagine, and thanks and blessings followed King Duttu-Gemunu on his way back to his palace in Anuradhapura.

Soon a big hall was erected in the jungle by the King's masons, for the marriage festival of Prince Sali and Asoka-Mala. Just before everything was ready, a chariot was sent by the old King, full of gold and jewels, with a letter in which was written. "Asoka-Mala's weight in gold, as a wedding gift from King Gemunu to his son."

Then the King appeared in state with his Ministers at the marriage-feast and by taking

food with Asoka-Mala, he raised her from her low caste.

He had a beautiful palace built for Sali and Asoka-Mala in the jungle, near the Chandala village and here they lived contentedly and happily together.

King Duttu-Gemunu visited them sometimes and he felt happy in their happiness. But his son could never become King, as this was against the custom, and this old established custom could not be violated. The King felt the want of a son very much, when the time of his end came; but Prince Sali never regretted that he had given up his Kingdom for the sake of his beautiful wife Asoka-Mala.

[“Oh, mother dear, that *was* a beautiful story. Thank you so much,” cried the whole chorus of eager children. They had listened very attentively and some had tears in their eyes.

“I think Prince Sali was a *very* good man, for giving up his throne for the sake of Asoka-Mala.” said Gnanawattie, who was generally a very quiet girl.

“I think,” echoed wise little Somawattie, “Asoka-Mala must have been so beautiful, that Prince Sali could not help himself. And then if she could sing so well too, I do not wonder he wanted to stay with her. Besides

he could live in the jungle all the time instead of in a palace in the city and he loved the trees and flowers so much.”]

“Well my children,” said the mother, I must confess that I myself admire the faithfulness of Prince Sali ; but for *Lanka* this step was a very fatal one. For, now that King Duttu-Gemunu had no son who could follow him on the throne, a great many troubles arose soon after his death. King Duttu-Gemunu, you know, was one of the greatest Sinhalese Kings you ever had and if Prince Sali had succeeded him, perhaps he would have been almost as great a king, having the hero blood of his father in him.

“But it is of no use thinking what *might* have been. The fact is there, that as Prince Sali could not be King after his father’s death, Duttu-Gemunu’s younger brother “Tissa,” became King and he received the name “Sedetissa.”

STORY V.
KING VALAGAMBA.

CHAPTER I.

HOW THE ELEPHANT FOUND THE
NEW KING.

King Sedetissa, Duttu-Gemunu's brother, (who by the way ascended the throne 137 B.C.) completed the Ruanweli Dagoba, which his brother had almost finished before his death and he rebuilt the Brazen-Palace, seven storeys high, which was burnt down by an accident during his reign. He was a good king, but not in any way so great as Duttu-Gemunu had been. King Sedetissa was followed on the throne by three of his sons, who were not very remarkable kings and of whom I will only tell you, that the last of the three was murdered by one of his faithless ministers, who took possession of the throne.

The Sinhalese were not satisfied with him at all and as there was no rightful heir to the murdered king, they resorted to an old time custom, namely to *find* a king, as there was no suitable successor to the throne. The clever State-elephant had to do this.

It was arranged thus :

The State-elephant of the late king was gorgeously decorated, and he was told by his attendants that he must go and find the



(All rights reserved.) "Suddenly stopping near a banyan-tree...the elephant lifted his trunk, trumpeted, knelt down..." (To face page 73.)

right king. Then he was let out of his stable.

The elephant was followed by people of rank and by his attendants, and the person, picked up by the elephant and put on his back, became the king. (The elephants seem to have been very clever and generally they found a person of good birth.)

On this occasion the State-elephant rushed out of his stable without hesitation. Followed by the faithful ministers of the late king and by a number of people, he left the city and went on the country road for several miles. Suddenly stopping near a banyan-tree, under which a weary, poorly clad, but noble-looking youth was resting, the elephant lifted his trunk, trumpeted, knelt down and seizing the astonished youth with his trunk, put him gently on his back. Then the ministers and the accompanying people knelt down and hailed him as the new king !

The clever elephant now turned towards the village in which the youth, up to this time, had lived and to the astonishment of the people, the youth, whose origin had been unknown and who so far had been considered a burden to the village, was carried around on the Royal elephant as the new king !

The story of the child-hood of this Prince must be told now. It is a strange one ! Just listen !

One day, a poor, young woman came into a village, not very far from Anuradhapura and

pleaded with the wife of the headman to take compassion on her and admit her into her house. She was apparently of high birth, but she would not give her name and seemed to be very unhappy.

The woman of the house took pity on her and gave her permission to stay, giving her some house-work to do.

The next day the headman's wife found the stranger in tears and on the verge of despair. After long hesitation she confessed that she had left her little son in a cave in the jungle, where he would certainly die of starvation if she were not allowed to bring him to the house. At first the headman's wife would not consent to have such a burden in the house, but at last she allowed the woman to fetch the child.

Both the mother and child lived from this time in the house, but were not treated very well.

The poor woman often had to go out into the village and ask for work, so that she could earn enough to feed herself and her son, who grew up to be a handsome lad, with the bearing of a Prince. She sent him to the village priest for his education, and he was a credit to his teacher. But some of his companions were jealous of the praises he received from his teacher and taunted him with being fatherless, saying that his mother was a poor unfortunate woman. He had many a fight with them in his mother's defence, and

generally he managed to come off victorious. In consequence of this he was not on good terms with some of the boys and others feared him.

His mother promised to tell him who he was, when he was older and when the right time for it had come. She always grew so very sad when he asked these questions, that he gave up questioning her and only wondered who his mother was and why she kept her secret to herself.

One day, it had been a hard day for the sad, strange, woman who had not earned enough to buy some rice for her son, she pleaded with the headman's wife to give her a little paddy to cook a meal for him, as he would come back hungry from the temple-school.

But the headman's wife, who had lately taken a dislike to the stranger, who seemed to her so very haughty in spite of her poverty, wanted to humble her and said: "All the servants have gone out and the paddy is in the granary, too high up to get it down without a ladder, and there is not even a ladder anywhere. I cannot give you any."

When the strange woman pleaded again, the headman's wife answered crossly. "Well, if you will let me use *you* as a ladder, stand near the wall, so that I can step on your shoulders, then I will get down some paddy for you." Quite indignant at this suggestion, because it was clearly meant as an insult, the stranger withdrew. But again she thought that her

poor hungry boy would have to suffer and so she humbled herself and actually allowed the headman's wife to step on her shoulder to get the paddy, which she gave most grudgingly, murmuring that the big, lazy boy might earn his own rice instead of going to school!

The rice was cooked with bitter tears for the son, who came back happy and contented from the temple-school, where he had earned special praise. He looked at his mother, who had tears in her eyes and an ugly dirty dust-spot on her white jacket. What did this mean? He tenderly asked his mother the reason of her sadness and the meaning of the dusty mark.

The unhappy woman confessed what had happened and her son unable to restrain himself, jumped up at once with flashing eyes, intending to avenge the insult. Turning his indignant face towards his mother, who had done her best to calm him, he hotly exclaimed: "I cannot and will not eat this rice, which has been given to you with an insult and which you have prepared for me with tears. I will go and find some work, so that I can earn enough rice for you and me and to enable you to leave this house, where you have been humbled and insulted."

With these words he walked out of the house and out of the village.

It was hot, the sun burning down on the youth without mercy. He was hungry and so when he came to a big banyan-tree, he sank

down under its grateful shade, ready to fall asleep and forget his grief. But suddenly he heard a noise and looking up he saw a mighty elephant with huge tusks rushing along the road. Although there was no rider on his back, the elephant was decorated with royal ornaments and many people followed him. What did this mean?

The youth was so tired and hungry that he closed his eyes in indifference, unable to think. But, the elephant stopped, trumpeted just before him, and to his utter astonishment, lifted him on to his back. Then he was carried back to the village like a prince!

Coming to the headman's house the elephant stood still and the boy's mother, his poor insulted mother, rushed out, and falling on her knees, with clasped hands she cried: "Thanks be to the Triple Gem! My prayers have been heard! At last I see thee my son, the son of the great King Sedetissa, in the place which belongs to thee! Be a true father to thy people, who need thy strong arm."

The whole village ran together, wondering what all this meant. When the villagers heard the strange story of the queen, who had to flee and hide herself and how she had brought up her son in poverty, and had lived among them for years, some *wondered* and some *trembled* for they were aware that mother and son had not always been treated fairly.

And well they might *tremble*, for the young

King had no mercy on those, who had ill-treated his mother and him.

The headman and his wife were hanged at once on the jak-tree in their own garden, and the boys who had taunted the Prince unmercifully, were also put to death. And over the whole village he pronounced the curse of degradation.

Then the young King had his mother royally dressed and she too mounted the elephant.

Thus followed by a great number of people they entered Anuradhapura.

Here King Valagamba executed the faithless Minister, who had killed the late King, and was yet sitting on the throne, and then he mounted the throne of his ancestors, hailed with enthusiasm by his Sinhalese subjects.

CHAPTER II.

THE KING VALAGAMBA.

The young king, although full of energy and strength, was not able to keep his throne for a long time, for seven Tamil Chiefs came over to Lanka, marched to Anuradhapura, attacked and defeated Valagamba, whose army was not strong enough to withstand this Tamil attack and the king and his family had to flee.

He had his two queens with him, Anula and Somadevi, besides his adopted son (his elder brother's child) and his own little son. But the carriage in which they were all seated, was too heavy, and the question arose, who should be left behind. The young king had to be saved for his country's sake and so the Queen Somadevi, offered to leave the carriage and to hide herself somewhere, till the king could rescue her.

Somadevi however was very beautiful and when one of the Tamil Chiefs saw her, he took her a prisoner and went back to India with her, thinking that this beautiful Queen of Lanka was for him a sufficient prize.

Another of the Tamil Chiefs was satisfied with stealing the begging-bowl of the Lord Buddha, which King Valagamba had not been able to take with him in his flight. It was covered with jewels and had been well taken care of in the palace.

So now, only five of the seven Tamil Chiefs were left in Lanka. They however gave so much trouble to Valagamba, that he had to wander about in Lanka seeking refuge in caves and jungles for fifteen years.

One of these hiding-places was a big cave at Dambulla in a huge rock, which later on he made into a temple.

The five Tamil Chiefs tried to rule Lanka. But there was constant war between them and finally four of the five having murdered each other, king Valagamba after fifteen years

of wandering, succeeded in collecting a sufficiently strong army to kill the last Tamil Chief and to drive the Tamils out of the Island.

Now he ascended the throne again and for twelve years, till his death, he reigned in Lanka! He was a real father to his people and under him Lanka regained some of her prosperity.

His faithful Queen Somadevi, who had been treated with great respect in India, was allowed to return to Lanka at King Valagamba's request, without resort to force of arms, for the Sinhalese King had won for himself the esteem of his Indian enemies. To commemorate her recovery, Valagamba built a beautiful Dagoba in Anuradhapura and called it the "Suva-narama.

The war had made the country very poor and the King's Treasury was empty, but still Valagamba went to work to make the cave in Dambulla, in which he had found refuge during his forced wanderings, into a magnificent Temple. He had a large recumbent statue of the Buddha cut out into the rock (forty-seven feet long) had other statues made of the Buddha sitting and standing, and had the walls of the cave decorated with paintings of historical scenes, such as "the landing of Vijaya" and "the single combat of King Duttu-Gemunu and King Elala" etc. and when all was finished he looked



The inside of Dambulla Rock Temple.

with satisfaction and pride on this work of gratitude.*

But when the time came to pay the skilful workmen, who demanded their wages, the poor king had no money and so once more he had to leave his Palace and take refuge in one of his former hiding-places in the Kurunegala district. Here, where the workmen had followed him, demanding their pay, the Devas came to the rescue of the King, showing him a big vein of silver. He gladly accepted the gift and paid his impatient workmen.

In gratitude for the help he had received, he built at that place a Vihara and called it the Ridee-Vihara, (Silver Temple) which can be seen to this day.

Besides the buildings just mentioned, King Valagamba built a mighty Dagoba, the Abhayagiri-Dagoba, in gratitude for the recovery of his throne after fifteen years of wandering. This Dagoba was four-hundred and five feet high, much higher than the Ruanweli-Dagoba, built by King Duttu-Gemunu, and its ruins astonish the visitor even to the present day.

When King Valagamba died in 76 B.C., Lanka was fairly prosperous. But I am very sorry to say many troubles arose after his death and there is very little to be said

* There are five caves in the same rock in Dambulla, which have been made into Temples by later Kings. All are now in a state of good preservation and many pilgrims and visitors come to worship and see this old historic place in Dambulla.

about the kings for the two-hundred years that followed.

["One thing which Valagamba did, was very wrong I think," said thoughtful Amara-wattie, "and that was, that he killed the headman and his wife and the boys, who used to taunt him. It seems to me, if he had not done that, he would have been a very *good* king as well as a *great* king."

"Yes dear," said the Mother; "I also cannot forgive him that cruel deed, for even if the headman's wife was insulting to the queen, she had allowed both of them to stay in her house very long and she did not know who they were. And then, boys will be boys and may be they did not mean to hurt Valagamba more than they hurt each other. But then you must not forget Valagamba was taken out of his poverty and insignificance so suddenly, that he probably lost his balance of mind for a little while and wanted to show his power. Let us hope that he regretted the rash deed afterwards."]

["Dear children" continued the Mother the next evening, "I will tell you the story of a foolish King, who lost his life on account of a very childish trick, which he played just *once* too often.]"

But before I do that, I must mention, that about fifty years after King Valagamba's death, the first Sinhalese Queen named "Anula" reigned in Lanka. She was a very wicked woman, just about as *bad*, as Vihara-Maha-Devi had been *good*. Only think of it, within the five years of her reign, she poisoned thirty-two men, whom she first made her husbands and then, when she got tired of them, she poisoned them. At last she was killed herself."

"Oh, I wish you had not told us about that wicked woman Anula!" exclaimed one of the girls almost crying "I always liked that name so much and I wanted to ask you to call me 'Anula,' as I have the name of 'Maria,' which I do not like. But now I do not want to be called Anula at all, I will keep my name and try rather to be a good 'Maria.'"

"Well, dear child, we will find another name for you then," said the mother laughing, "How would you like to be called 'Mayawattie,' which has just about the same meaning as 'Maria'?"

"Thank you, dear Mother," answered the girl quite comforted. "I like that name very much and I will try to be a good Mayawattie as will be expected from me, having such a good name now."

"Do you hear girls," she cried. "You must call me 'Mayawattie' from now. That is my name."

Very much amused were the girls, who pro-

mised to call Maria by her new name from this time onwards.

“After Anula’s death,” continued the mother, “some Kings reigned, who were very fond of flowers and cultivated them extensively. One of them, Bhatiya I., once covered the whole of the Ruanweli-Dagoba with flowers and had them kept fresh by watering them by machinery from the Abhaya-tank.

“Another King was so devoted to the Priesthood, that he wanted to make himself and his whole family slaves to them.

“The second Queen of Lanka, *Sivali*, reigned only for four months and was then murdered, and so you can see for yourselves, my children, there was a great deal of trouble in Lanka at that time.

“And now at last I am coming to my story, which I will call The King’s fatal Frolic.”]

STORY VI.

THE KING'S FATAL FROLIC.

There lived in Lanka about the year 50 A.D. a King named Yasalalakatissa, who was very young and not very good. He had come to the throne by murdering his elder brother, so you see he was not a pious king. He liked fun more than learning and governing his land, and through this love of fun he met his death.

Among his attendants there was a gate-porter by the name of *Subha*, who looked so much like the King that they could very easily be taken one for the other. In their character they were also alike, for both liked frolic and merry-making very much.

One day the King thought, he would have some *special* fun, something new, which would really be comical.

So he called Subha the gate-porter and made him give up his gate-porter's dress, which Yasalalakatissa put on himself. Then he dressed Subha in his own royal clothes and accompanied him solemnly to the throne, in the Audience Hall—where the Ministers were to gather within a few minutes for an audience.

The King himself, as gate-porter, hurried back to the Palace gate and stood there, holding the gate-keeper's staff in his hands and

bowing down deeply before the ministers who entered the Palace gate.

When they had all passed in, he ran up to the Audience-Hall to find out how the mock-king would behave in his new dignity.

Yasalalakatissa could hardly keep from bursting into loud laughter, when he saw, that the ministers had not the slightest idea, that they were not standing before the *real* King, as Subha behaved very well and issued his orders with a very serious face.

After the audiences were over, the sham-gate-porter accompanied the ministers out of the Palace with many ceremonious bows. They wondered why Subha, the gate-porter, was so much more polite on this occasion, than he usually was and praised him for his politeness, which praise he accepted with a very modest smile. After all the ministers had gone, the sham-gate-porter went into the King's room and they exchanged clothes again and the King had many a merry laugh about his playing the part of gate-porter so well.

The King enjoyed this foolish play very much and he did not stop at this single attempt. A good many times he enjoyed this amusement, till at length Subha got so accustomed to playing the part of King, that he made up his mind to *become* King in reality.

So one day, when Subha, the gate-porter, was sitting again on the King's throne in royal attire and when King Yasalalakatissa

himself was standing at the door of the Audience-hall, listening to the orders the sham-king was giving, he, to his horror, heard Subha command that the state executioner should be brought to cut off the head of the insolent door-keeper, who did not pay proper respect to his Majesty the King.

In vain did King Yasalalakatissa remonstrate that *he* was the King and that the supposed king who had given this order was Subha, the gate-porter. The executioner, being unaware of this foolish amusement of the King, had to obey orders and the poor foolish King Yasalalakatissa actually lost his head, because he had allowed Subha the gate-porter to *play* the King once too often.

Subha, the gate-porter assumed the sovereignty at once. He called himself Subha-Raja when it was found out that he was not really Yasalalakatissa.

He was in his turn murdered by a Prince of the Lambakarna tribe named Vasabha, after he had thus reigned six years.

["Oh mother dear, that was sad that the King's frolic had such dreadful consequences to him! I wish I could have explained to the executioner that he was killing the wrong man," exclaimed Lelawattie.

"I wonder why there existed an executioner

at all," said Tillatna solemnly. "Buddhists ought not to have anybody or anything killed! But it shows that at that time people were not very good. I do hope there will come better times for Lanka soon!"

"I am very sorry to say, the times *were* very troubled in Lanka," said the mother "and we must again pass over quite a number of years. The Kings who reigned in Lanka during this time were mostly weak and the Tamils invaded the country again and destroyed some of the sacred buildings.

"The Chiefs also rebelled against the Kings and the Kings were not strong enough to keep order. Again the Tamils took advantage of this confusion and the King of Chola (now Tanjore) came over to Lanka, plundered and stole what he could and even took twelve-thousand Sinhalese young men as prisoners to India.

"This was in the reign of King 'Vahanasika-Tissa.'

"We call this the third Tamil Invasion.

"King Vahanasika-Tissa's brave son 'Gajabahu', who followed him on the throne, made good this disaster and I will tell you an interesting story about him and how he managed to bring back the twelve thousand Sinhalese youths and another twelve-thousand Tamil youths to make up for the trouble the Cholians had given to the parents and relatives of these captured young men. So my children to-morrow you will hear the story of King Gajabahu and his giant Neela."]

STORY VII.

KING GAJABAHU AND HIS
GIANT NEELA.

CHAPTER I.THE GOOD KING.

King Gajabahu, who reigned in Ceylon about two hundred and fifty years after King Duttu-Gemunu's death was a brave, good, and just ruler, who loved his people as a father loves his children.

He was in the habit of wearing very plain clothing and thus he loved to walk about late in the evenings in the city of Anuradhapura, to find out whether any wrong was going on among his subjects.

Thus disguised and quite alone he was walking round Anuradhapura one night.

Everything seemed quiet and he was almost ready to return to his palace when, on coming to the outskirts of the town, he heard the sound of crying and wailing, coming from a small, but neat-looking cottage. It was a woman's voice which he heard.

Then the King made a mark on the door of this house and went back to his palace.

Early the next morning he called his Ministers together and asked them, whether

any injustice, which had caused unhappiness, had been practised in his Capital. The ministers answered, that all the subjects were happy and content under the rule of the great and good King Gajabahu.

“How could anything be wrong, when His Majesty the King, is the image of justice and goodness?” they continued.

King Gajabahu became quite indignant at hearing this flattery and exclaimed, “I heard such wailing and crying last night, that my heart felt very sad, to find that unhappiness could exist among my people, while I am their father and King. If everybody in my kingdom were as happy as you say, then this sad sound would not have reached my ears. You, who can flatter me and want to make me believe, that everybody is happy, go at once, find the house which I marked with my own mark (which you know), and bring to me the woman who was in such great distress last night.”

The Minister thus spoken to, went on his errand at once. He found the marked house and entering, saw an old woman, bowed down with grief, crying and lamenting.

She was brought before the King and stated, that she was a poor widow and that her two sons had been carried away as prisoners by the King of the Cholians, who in the reign of King Gajabahu's father ‘Vahanasika-Tissa’ had taken twelve thousand Sinhalese youths away to India.

“Now,” the poor widow continued, “I

have no support in my old age and I am almost starving."

King Gajabahu comforted the poor old widow and promised her that he would try his best to have her two sons restored to her.

He at once ordered one of his attendants, to provide food and all necessary things for the widow, till she had her own sons back to attend to her, and that the Kings orders were obeyed, I need not say.

CHAPTER II.

THE GIANT NEELA.

Then the King further, at once made preparations to invade the land of the King of the Cholians and he marched with his army, accompanied by his giant Neela, to the North of Lanka, near the place where Jaffna now is.

Here he left his army encamped, ready to be called at any time and started with Neela only for India.

How could they get over to the other shore you may ask me? Had they brought any ships with them?

No, they had no ships! But Neela, the giant, had an iron staff and with this iron staff he could work wonders! He took this

staff in both his strong hands and struck the water of the Ocean with it and it divided, and left a dry road, so that King Gajabahu and his giant Neela could walk over to India without even getting their feet wet.

Having arrived in Chola, the giant Neela showed his enormous strength, by taking two of the elephants belonging to the King of Chola, and crashing them together with such force that both died. The frightened people ran to their king and told him about this and their king sent a message to King Gajabahu asking him : “ Why have you come to my country with an army to *devastate* it ? ”

King Gajabahu answered : “ I have left my army in Lanka, ready to come over here whenever I need it. I have only brought my giant Neela with me, who has shown you what he can do. I have come over here to take back my twelve-thousand Sinhalese youths, whom you took away from Lanka, when my father ruled there. If you do not give them back to me, I will bring destruction on your country, for I have more such strong warriors than the one I brought with me. So take warning, oh King ! ”

The Cholian King, thinking that he had mastered the Sinhalese once before, sent this answer to King Gajabahu. “ Even if you go to Deva-Loka and ask the Suras to help you, you will not be able to overcome me. ”

Now Gajabahu became angry and he vowed that not only should the Cholian King give

(All rights reserved.)

"The Giant Nodda took his staff... and struck the water of the ocean with it...."

(To see, age 92.)



back *his* twelve-thousand Sinhalese youths but also he should give him twelve thousand of his own people to be taken over to Lanka with him.

He sent word to the Indian King, that the Capital of Chola would be burned to ashes, if he did not do the will of King Gajabahu.

To show how great was the strength of the *one* giant, who had come with him, King Gajabahu made him take a handful of dry sand and squeeze it so hard that water dripped from it. As a further test of strength Neela took his iron rod, with which he had divided the waves and shook it so violently, that water streamed out of it.

These feats of strength, which the one strong Sinhalese displayed, alarmed the Cholians so much, that they implored their King to do the will of the Sinhalese King. They argued: "If *one* man can do these things, what would a whole army be able to do?"

So the King of Chola consented to the demand of Gajabahu, released the twelve-thousand Sinhalese prisoners and sent twelve-thousand of his own subjects to be taken over to Lanka by King Gajabahu, as he demanded.

Whether the giant Neela again divided the waves, so that these twenty-four-thousand people could cross over with dry feet to Lanka, I do not know, but it is recorded that they all arrived safely in Lanka and the poor old

widow's heart was gladdened, when she saw her two sons again, who took good care of her until her death.

CHAPTER III.

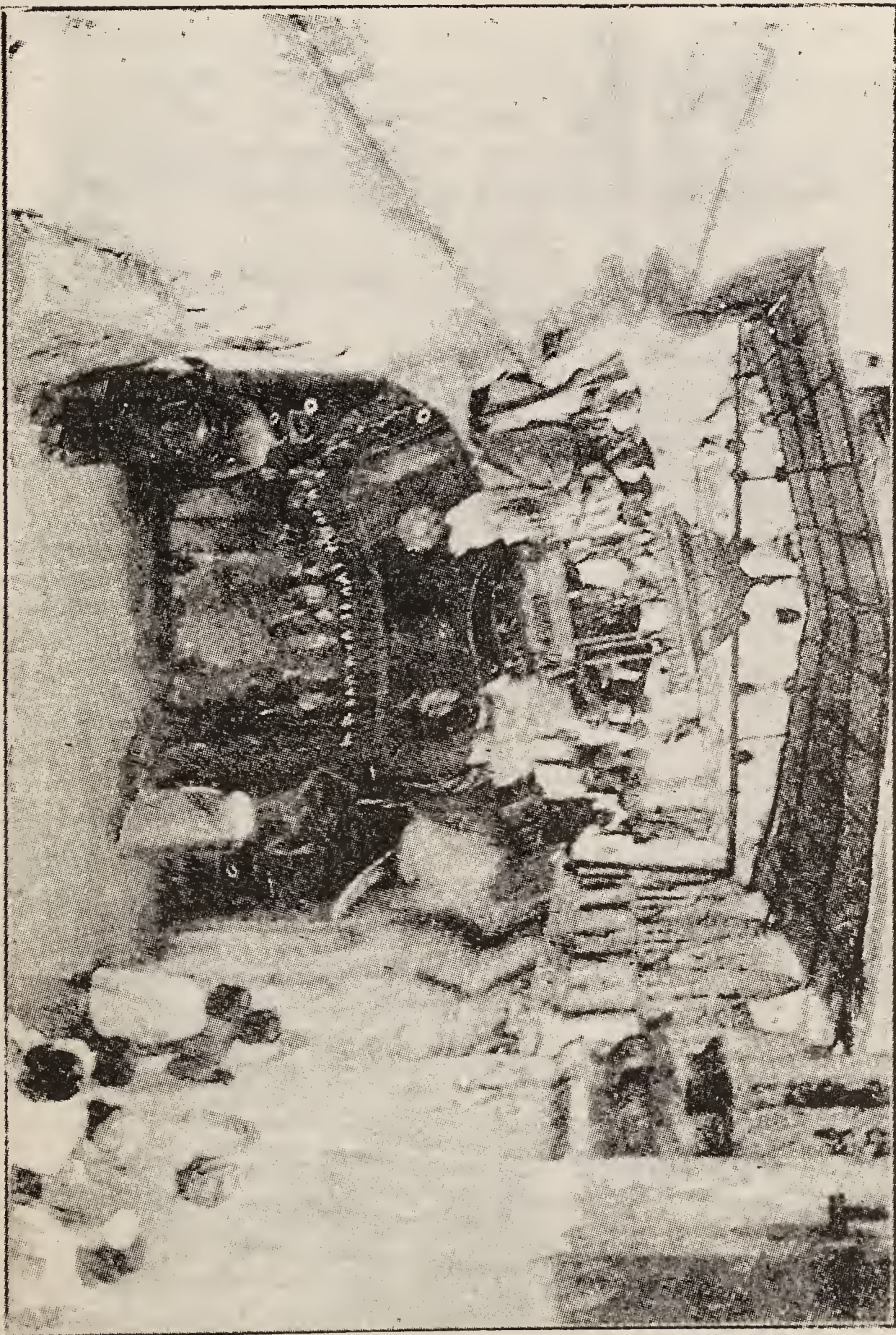
THE PERAHERA.

King Gajabahu celebrated his victory over the Cholians with a grand procession or Perahera which was held in Anuradhapura, and delighted the hearts of all the population.

Besides the twenty-four-thousand Sinhalese and Tamil youths, who walked in this procession, King Gajabahu had also the holy vessels of four Temples carried round with great pomp on the backs of some tame elephants taken away by the Cholians formerly. Also the giant Neela, played a very important part in this procession, as you may imagine. -

Every year a similar procession was held in Anuradhapura in memory of this great victory over the Cholians by King Gajabahu with the help of his giant Neela.

Probably *this* procession, in honour of King Gajabahu's victory over the Cholians, was the origin of the present grand Perahera which is held every August in Kandy and which lasts for a week. It is *now* held in honour of the "Holy Tooth Relic," but up to the time of



"Dressing the big Elephant in the Temple for the Perahuera."

(To face page 94.)

King Kirti Sri Raja Sinha (about 1750 A.D.) the annual procession, first held in Anuradhapura, then in Polonnaruwa and latterly in Kandy, was not held in honour of the Tooth Relic of the Buddha, as is done at the present time.

When the Siamese Priests, invited by the King Kirti Sri Raja Sinha came to Ceylon, in order to restore Buddhism to that purity, which it had lost during the invasions of the Tamils, the Tooth Relic was *for the first time* carried in front of the Perahera on King Kirti Sri's state elephant under his state-canopy. From this time the yearly Perahera in Kandy takes place in honour of the Tooth-Relic.

The ceremony of the water-cutting in connection with it, which takes place up to the present day, is very little understood now. It seems to me, it might be explained when we think of the giant Neela's cutting the water of the Ocean, in order to walk over to India with King Gajabahu. Might it not be that the present ceremony is a half forgotten reminder of it?

[“Have you ever seen the Kandyan Perahera, my children”? continued the mother. “If you have not, you must try to go to Kandy in the month of August, when it takes place every year. You will see many tame

elephants then, sometimes as many as sixty. They march by threes in the procession, the biggest elephant in the middle."

"Please do not stop, mother dear, go on and tell us more about this Perahera," cried the girls.

"Well then, listen my children " said the mother.

"The tame elephants used for this procession, are taken to the Maligawa Temple in Kandy (the Temple of the Holy Tooth of the Lord Buddha). In this Temple the elephants are decorated with coverings made of red cloth, embroidered with gold and silver, and the canopies, under which relics are placed in gold and silver caskets, are put on their backs. The biggest elephant, a splendid tusker, forms the middle of the whole Perahera, because she carries under a magnificent howdah (which has long cords hanging down held by the gorgeously clad temple-servants), one of the many jewelled caskets, in the midst of which the Tooth-Relic lies.*

"The procession starts from the outside of the Maligawa Temple, and Kandyan-Chiefs in state attire, devil-dancers in their grotesque costumes and masks, torch-bearers, tom-tom players, stick-dancers, etc., fill the spaces between the elephants, as well as an enormous crowd of gaily dressed people. It is really a most gorgeous sight, never to be forgotten !

* Formerly the Tooth-relic was carried in this procession, but that has been discontinued for some time.



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The Porahera in Kandy.

(To face page 97.)

“In a solemn and stately manner the procession wends its way round the Temple-grounds and through the city.

“It is remarkable how quietly and solemnly elephants march. The people are sometimes quite near their feet; but no elephants ever injure anybody. They seem to be aware of the trust put in them and the only extravagance which they allow themselves sometimes is to reach with their trunks over the low walls of the verandahs in the houses or hotels which they pass, while in procession, and receive a banana or a papaw from the ladies or children, who stand there admiring the huge but gentle creatures.

“A man on high stilts also accompanies the procession and I am quite sure he is supposed to represent ‘Giant Neela of old.’ For a whole week, sometimes in day-time, sometimes at night, the Perahera goes on. The last day is the grandest. Already at midnight preparations are made in four Hindu-Temples, for the most peculiar of ceremonies in connection with it. This is the ‘Water-cutting Ceremony.’ The golden sword or staff and the golden water-lotas in which the water from last year’s ceremony is kept are under the custody of the Hindu Priests.

In procession the golden staff and the Randolis (golden palanquins) with the golden water vessels are carried to the Gedige or or Asgiriya Vihara at the Adhahana Maluwa (Royal cremation-grounds), where the procession from the Maligawa-Temple meets them.

The Dalada (Tooth) Perahera remains there, as guard and protection of the Tooth-Shrine, which is placed in this Vihare in the meanwhile, and the Dewala procession goes to the Diyakapanatota at Getambe in Peradeniya (place of the Water-cutting Ceremony).

There the four Kapurales (Priests of the Hindu-Dewalas) get into a decorated boat with the golden staff and the golden lotas. They are rowed into mid-stream and there the water is cut with the golden staff on the left side of the boat, while the lotas which contains the water from last year's ceremony are emptied on the right side. Then they are refilled from the left side and the boat is taken back to the shore. The lotas are replaced in the waiting Randolis and before the procession moves on, all persons, and even the elephants who carried the Kapurales who have taken part in this ceremony, must take a bath in the river for purification. Now the procession returns to the town, halting at the Hindu-Temple till about midday. Then all the Chiefs of the Temples and the Kapurales assemble here and start in procession to the Adhahana Maluwa, arriving there about 2 p.m. Here the Dalada Maligawa Perahera joins and heads this procession. And now the whole long Perahera with Tooth-Shrine and Randolis walks solemnly through the whole town, accompanied by thousands of people. The Perahera ends respectively at the four Dewalas and at the Maligawa-Temple, where the elephants are

undressed. The visitors linger yet for hours round the Temples and everybody is happy and contented to have seen the great Kandy Perahera."

"Oh, Mother dear," exclaimed little Somawattie quite excitedly, "I *did* see the Perahera last year and I wondered what the meaning of the man with the high wooden legs was. I can imagine now that he must represent the Giant Neela of King Gajabahu. But" (and she looked inquiringly at the mother) "Mother dear, *that* man *did* look very tall and he *was* as tall as some of the small houses in the street. If Giant Neela was as tall as that man, why could not King Duttu-Gemunu's strong warriors, whom you called at first giants have been just as tall? They could do such great feats of strength you know!"

"Well, my wise little girl, you put me almost into a corner," answered the mother with a smile. "You see, this man at the Kandy Perahera, made himself look so tall, because he wanted to be seen everywhere. I do not think that Giant Neela, even as a *giant*, could have been as tall as this man on stilts! People are always inclined to exaggerate or make things look bigger than they are in reality. So dearie, dismiss the idea from your mind that giants can be as big as houses!"

"Well," said the little girl, quite indignantly, "I wish people would speak and act

the truth, and would not always make things appear different from what they are."

"You are quite right, my dear little girl" said the Mother, "I only hope that you yourself will always remain as honest and straight-forward as you are now."

"These tame elephants of whom I spoke to you just now" continued the Mother "are really very clever and I think they are vain too. I must tell you a little story about what happened a few years ago at the Perahera which is very amusing.

"There were a great many elephants that year and they had not enough decorations for all of them. So one elephant had to go without. He was not a very big one, but he had been in the procession before and had evidently a recollection of having been decorated once. He looked round at the other elephants, who walked out proudly to join the procession in front of the Temple-grounds, and he would not move. His attendants coaxed him a long time to come out, and at last they beat him, but he would not go. He stood there like a little mountain, stubbornly refusing obedience, even when he heard the beating of the tom-toms and saw the procession begin to move. Then one of the men, who knew that this same elephant, had never before refused to obey, suggested, that they should get a blanket and put it over him, he thought that perhaps he wanted to be decorated like the other elephants. They got a blanket, threw it over

him and one of the men climbed quickly on his back. Hardly was he settled when the elephant, with big strides walked out of the Temple-grounds, joined the procession and walked along just as majestically as the others; perhaps thinking that he was now just as handsomely decorated as the others."

"That was a jolly little story" said wise "little Seelawattie, "I think that elephant was very clever and if I had known it, I would have given him a beautiful red blanket with gold fringe all round" !

"Thanks very much for all you have told us to-night" cried the girls, "it was very nice."

"What I have to tell you to-morrow will please you also, I am sure," said the Mother, "for it is a very remarkable story, a story quite different from any of the others. It is about a King, who was very pious and charitable, and who sacrificed himself, because he did not want bloodshed to be done for his sake and because he wanted to help a poor man to get a great reward, which was set on his Kingly head.

It occurred in Lanka about one hundred and twenty years later than the last story which I told you about Gajabahu and his giant Neela."

STORY VIII.

SRI SANGHA-BO.

CHAPTER I.

THE LITTLE PRINCE.

In a village near the Mahiyangana Temple (in the present Western Province), there lived a Prince of the Lambakarna Caste named Selabhaya. He had an only son.

The sages of his village prophesied, that this son would become a great Monarch and as Selabhaya was a very religious man, he thought that if his son were to become a *great* king, he would like him to become a *good* king also. He himself had got his learning and religious teaching from the community of the Sangha-Bhadi Monastery, and he decided that his son should be educated and brought up as a Monk by the same Order.

So Selabhaya gave his little son over to this Monastery to be educated entirely according to the monastic rules.

Prince Selabhaya died, when his son was only seven years old and now the High-Priest of the Mahiyangana-Temple, who was called Nanda, took entire charge of the little boy and brought him up as a Monk.

The young Prince was clever, and kind-

hearted, he had good manners and was very handsome and industrious.

When the Prince had become a young man, the High-Priest gave him some special instructions, and a great deal of good advice. He warned him against sin and specially against the sin of *anger*, which he compared to a snake, which could only be overcome by the shield of justice.

Sangha-Bo, as the Prince was called now, kept all the words of his beloved teacher within his heart and followed his teachings even in the smallest details and so he became a most remarkable young man.

The High-Priest was much pleased with his pupil and thought that now the time had come when he should go to Anuradhapura, where he could learn more from the Priesthood, attached to the great Ruanweli-Dagoba, and there gain more merit by his piety.

CHAPTER II.

SRI SANGHA-BO GOES TO ANURADHAPURA.

The High Priest Nanda himself accompanied Sangha-Bo to the Capital of Lanka, in order to put him under the training of the great Brotherhood of the Ruanweli-Dagoba.

On the road to Anuradhapura two other youths of the same caste, the Lambakarna caste, called Sanghatissa and Gothabhaya, joined them. They were also on their way to Anuradhapura.

All three young men became great friends and resolved to see as much as possible of each other while they lived in the Capital of Lanka.

As they were nearing Anuradhapura, and were passing over a bridge, the High-Priest ahead and the three young men one behind the other, according to their rank, as was the custom, a blind Brahman, who was also a prophet, heard their steps crossing the bridge and said, "I prophecy that the three Princes who walk behind the Priest will become the rulers of the Sinhalese."

Gothabhaya, who was the youngest and was consequently walking last, heard these words and asked the blind Brahman (without the knowledge of the two others): "which of these Princes will govern the longest?" "The one who governs the last," answered the blind Brahman.

When Gothabhaya heard that answer, he planned at once, that *he* would be the last of the three future Kings and he kept this plan constantly in his mind.

On arriving in Anuradhapura, Sanghatissa the eldest of these three princes became the friend of the reigning King Vijaya II., who gave him the post of General and Sub-King.

During the latter part of the same year, Sanghatissa, with the help of Gothabhaya, managed to murder King Vijaya II. and took possession of the throne himself.

Sangha-Bo had in the meanwhile occupied himself exclusively with religious matters at the Ruanveli-Dagabo and was very unwilling to accept the office of General, which was offered to him by the new King Sanghatissa.

But at last, he accepted it nominally at least, as there was no war and he could go on with his religious exercises.

The sly Prince Gothabhaya, took the post of Treasurer, which he filled very well, as he was collecting treasures for himself, thinking always that he would become King himself after a short while.

King Sanghatissa did not become a great favourite of the people as he was not always just. He did both good and bad deeds. The worst was that he oppressed the people with too many taxes, persuaded to do so by his avaricious Treasurer Gothabhaya and therefore his subjects disliked him.

King Sanghatissa loved jambus very much and with his whole household he used to frequent the Eastern Province where they grew in profusion.

Great feasts were held there and I suppose the villagers were not treated very kindly by all these grand people and this evidently led to a very bad feeling against the King.

The fact is, that at one of these festivals the villagers poisoned the jambus which were meant for the King and he died there in consequence.

CHAPTER III.

SRI SANGHA-BO BECOMES KING.

Gothabhaya, always thinking of the prophecy of the blind Brahman that the last of the three Kings would reign the longest, urged the people to raise Sangha-Bo to the throne.

The people, who had begun to love him very much on account of his gentleness and justice, gathered in crowds round Sangha-Bo and at last he consented to become King, as the priests *also* urged him to accept the crown.

King Sri Sangha-Bo at once made Gothabhaya his General and supporter and he commenced his reign with a succession of kind and merciful deeds. He specially attended to the wants of all the Monks.

During the nights the new King attended to his religious exercises and his life was more that of a Devotee than of a King. He really wished very often, that the time would not be far off, when he could make a great sacrifice.

During his reign, as punishment for the wickedness of the people (so the Athanagalla

Wansa says) a Yakkha came to Ceylon, who looked an awful monster! He had large red eyes and whenever he looked at a person, this person got red eyes also, was shaken by a violent fever and died after a few hours illness. This Yakkha then devoured the bodies of the people who died in this manner, and there was great terror among the people of Lanka.

When King Sri Sangha-Bo heard this, he resolved that he would stop this plague by offering his own life and thus save the lives of the frightened people. He meditated and fasted and in this way compelled the Yakkha to appear before him.

Now the King ordered his surgeon to cut the flesh off his arms to satisfy the hunger of the monster before him.

But the Yakkha would not accept this sacrifice. He implored the King not to offer his flesh to him, if he accepted it the King of the Yakkhas would kill him, as he was not allowed to eat the flesh of *pious* people.

Then the Yakkha pleaded with the King to let him have *one* village at least, so that he might live, as his food consisted of flesh.

The King refused this, and offered his own person to him instead. But the Yakkha could not devour him on account of his goodness and he pleaded then for *one* person out of each village.

This also was refused by Sri-Saṅgha-Bo. Then very humbly the Yakkha implored him to have the people of each village give him some bali (rice) offering every night.

To this the King agreed and the plague was stopped.

How gladly the villagers put out the bali offering every night, you may imagine my children, and how grateful they were to their saintly King you can also understand.

Soon after this a dreadful drought came to Lanka. All the tanks and wells were dry, and even trees and bushes hung down their heads and the flowers withered altogether. Famine was sure to come if this drought were to last much longer, for all the paddy crops would fail.

The ministers came to the King and implored him in the name of his subjects to try and prevent the starvation of his people. They said: "The Devas will have mercy on us, if your Majesty prevails on them to make it rain."

Then King Sri Saṅgha-Bo made a vow, that he would not rise from the ground till enough rain had fallen to lift his body up from the ground.

He went to the Ruanweli-Dagoba and threw himself down in the courtyard, and resolved to stay there prostrate, even if he should die, till enough rain had fallen to lift him up.

At once, (history says) by the influence of the Yakkhas and Nagas, who feared the power of this just King, rain clouds gathered and the rain streamed down. The lightning flashed and the thunder rolled. All nature, after it had drunk its fill, rejoiced. The tanks and the wells were filled, the birds sang gladly, the peacocks opened their tails like umbrellas and screamed with delight. The rivers, like laughing children, rushed down into the valleys and all nature was refreshed.

But still the rain could not lift up the prostrate King. So the Ministers had all the drains and outlets of water in the courtyard of the Ruanveli-Dagoba stopped up, so that at last the rain water collected so much that the King was lifted up.

Then King Sri Sangha-Bo stood up and went into his palace, from which he came out in festive attire, going with his household in procession to the Maha-Vihara, where a thanksgiving festival was held.

Thus did King Sri Sangha-Bo check the dreadful drought in Lanka !

The news of the justice and kindness of the King spread everywhere and the people, following his example, became also better, and happiness began to spread again in Lanka, after those troubled times.

But some people, seeing that the King was so good that he did not like to punish bad people, took advantage of this and united themselves as a band of robbers and went

about stealing and plundering. The King had them caught and put into prison. But what did he do during the night? He went into the prison, lectured them about their bad behaviour, and asked them to promise him that they would lead better lives.

When they had given their promise, he gave them money and clothes and let them secretly out of the prison.

But early in the morning the King sent for some bodies of men who had died a natural death and had them burned instead of the thieves, who had been sentenced to be burned to death.

The former robbers however, were very much ashamed of themselves. They returned to their homes and became better men, blessing King Sri Sangha-Bo for his goodness.

The only person who was getting uneasy, when he saw all the good deeds King Sri Sangha-Bo did, was his general Gothabhaya. He was afraid that the people would love their King Sri Sangha-Bo too much and that he would reign too long. Already almost four years had passed and Gothabhaya did not care to wait any longer for his turn to become King. So he made up his mind to take the throne away from Sri Sangha-Bo and to be King himself.

So Gothabhaya secretly left Anuradhapura through the Northern gate, to find those bands of robbers, who were living still in the

North of the Island and to bring them to Anuradhapura and besiege the city.

Gothabhaya in a short time succeeded in collecting an army of ruffians and he marched with them against Anuradhapura.

CHAPTER IV.

SRI SANGHA-BO LEAVES HIS THRONE.

When King Sri Sangha-Bo heard that Gothabhaya was marching against Anuradhapura, he resolved to leave the city quietly and alone, as he did not want any blood to be shed on his account. He was in a way glad to leave the throne behind him, as he had a mind more fit for devotion than for the government of a country.

So he left Anuradhapura in disguise, walking out through the Southern gate and taking nothing with him but his water-strainer, so that he could drink the water he needed without destroying so many insects which live in it.

Thus, all alone, he wandered on till he came to the Máya District and entered the magnificent forest of Attanagalla, where jak, mango, and jambu-trees grew, and flowering bushes greeted him, and where sweetly singing birds were perched on the

branches of the trees. Here, where the big-eyed deer looked at him curiously without running away in fright, where clear brooks were murmuring, he felt happy and free, and thought of commencing his Hermit life.

He found a cave near a lotus-pond and that became his resting place, where he lived for a short while quite alone, spending his whole time in religious exercises. His food he found around very easily, as fruit trees and edible roots grew plentifully in the jungle.

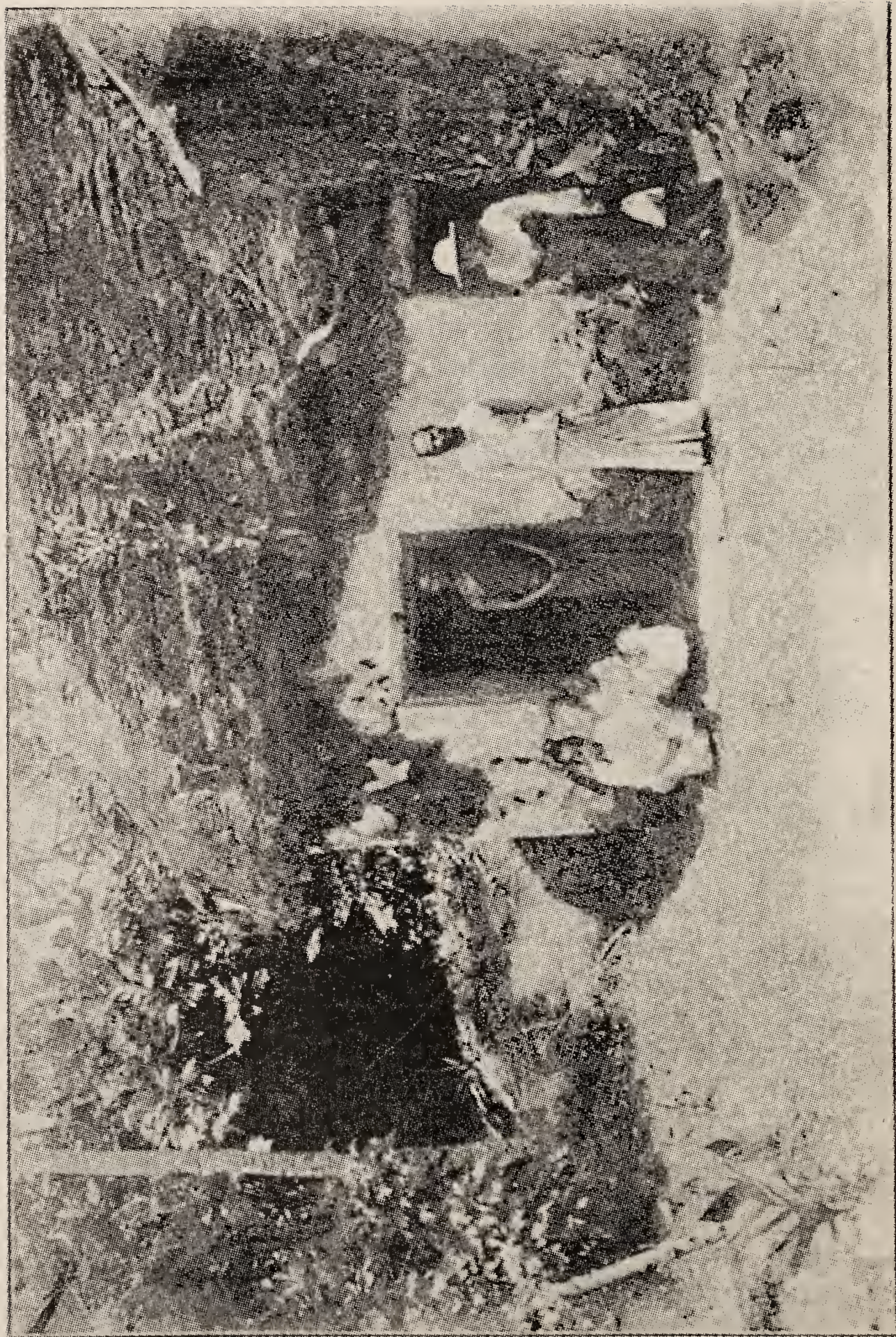
But this peaceful happiness was not to last very long.

CHAPTER V.

SRI SANGHA-BO GIVES HIS HEAD TO A POOR PEASANT.

In the meanwhile Gothabhaya finding Sri Sangha-Bo gone and the throne empty, had very gladly taken possession of it. But after a few days he began to fear that the people, who loved Sri Sanga-Bo so much, would begin searching for him and would perhaps find him, as nobody yet knew what had become of him.

So he had a rumour spread about, that Sri Sangha-Bo had been killed by some robbers, and he announced by beat of drum



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Nii Sangha-Bo's Resting-Place, (as it is now.)

(To face page 113.)

that a reward of one thousand gold pieces would be given to the one, who would bring him Sri Sangha-Bo's head.

Some bad people, after this proclamation, killed some of their enemies and brought their heads to King Gothabhaya, pretending that they had found Sri Sangha-Bo's head. But of course they were found out and were severely punished.

While this was going on in Anuradhapura, Sri Sangha-Bo lived quite contentedly in the jungle of Attanagalla, and knew nothing at all of the wicked plot against his life.

One day when he was wandering in the jungle searching for food, he met a poor peasant.

The peasant was so struck with the stately appearance of the Monk, that he very humbly begged him to share his meal with him. Sri Sangha-Bo thanked him, but would not accept his invitation, saying that the fruits of the jungle were his food, the branches of all trees his resting places and and the trees themselves his house. But the poor man knelt down before him and begged him once more to share his meal, so that he could not help accepting this very urgent request.

They sat down together, and the peasant first waited on Sri Sangha-Bo and then took his meal also, feeling very happy that he had shared it with such a saintly looking person.

After the meal was over, Sri Sangha-Bo asked about affairs in Anuradhapura and he heard with astonishment that King Gothabhaya had set a price of one thousand pieces of gold on Sri Sangha-Bo's head, and that a good many people had been killed in hopes that the new King would believe that one of the heads brought to him was that of Sri Sangha-Bo.

The peasant continued: "My own wife has asked me to try and find Sri Sangha-Bo's head, because we are very poor and through the one thousand gold pieces all our misery would be ended. I have run away from home because I love my King Sri Sangha-Bo very much, although I have never seen him. But I know he has freed us from the red-eyed Monster and made the rain fall, when almost all the ponds and tanks were dried up. I would rather lose my wife than do any harm to the good King. I hope he has not been killed by robbers, and that I shall meet him some day and do something for him."

Sri Sangha-Bo looked at the poor ignorant peasant very kindly and said: "Friend, your wish has already been fulfilled, for *I am* Sri Sangha-Bo. You have fed me and you have talked to me very kindly and you must accept from me the reward for all this."

The poor peasant was overjoyed when he heard this and was wondering what reward the former King, now a Monk, could give him, as he had nothing of his own.

Sri Sangha-Bo himself thought that now the time had come, that he could do a great deal of good by sacrificing himself, for thus the killing of innocent people for his sake would be stopped and the poor peasant would get the reward set on his head and he himself would gain great merit and would enter Nirvana.

So he spoke to the poor man thus: "Take my head and bring it to King Gothabhaya. You will receive the reward put upon it and I myself will be able to make this sacrifice and gain great merit by it." The peasant turned away in horror and cried out: "How could I kill such a holy man as you are! Let me go in peace!"

Sri Sangha-Bo called him back and said: "I do not ask *you* to kill *me*, I will give you my head *myself* and I will testify myself that *you* have not killed me, when you take my head to the King. Come here, kneel and bend your head down, close your eyes, open your arms and hands and receive what I am giving you willingly."

The peasant obeyed, with the tears streaming from his closed eyes. While he bent before the saintly King, the latter took his water strainer, marked a line of water round his neck and implored the Devas to give him strength to live long enough to place his severed head in the outstretched hands of the peasant. Then he took hold of his hair, and by his supernatural power pulled off his own head and put it into the hands of the kneeling

peasant, while his headless body fell among the flowers, which covered it lovingly with their white and yellow blooms.

The Devas of the forest sounded a long drawn "Sadhu" * and flowers fell upon the head, which the poor man wrapped up in the big sheath of an areca-nut palm. Then the peasant set out to walk to Anuradhapura.

Having arrived in Anuradhapura he went to the palace and offered Sri Sangha-Bo's head to King Gothabhaya, who could not believe that it was really Sri Sangha-Bo's head and who wanted to put the peasant in prison for killing some one in order to present a false head to the King.

The peasant, remembering that Sri Sangha-Bo had promised to testify to the identity of his head, threw the head into the air, where it stayed. Then with uplifted hands the peasant spoke solemnly: "Your Majesty, Sri Sangha-Bo himself will be my witness that this is his own head."

Then the head said: "O King, it is I myself, Thy Friend, Sangha-Bo! I am happy in the thought of having given away my head to this good man. Mayest thou be as happy as I am, in thy power as King and may the reward of one thousand gold pieces be given, as promised, to the poor peasant, who only did my bidding in taking my head to thee."

The astonished King then had a throne erected with a white canopy over it. Then the

* Blessing.

head of Sri Sangha-Bo was placed on it and he made flower offerings to it and implored its forgiveness. Then he prepared a great funeral festival and had the head of King Sri Sangha-Bo burnt with great honours.

The peasant received the promised reward, but he never was happy in the thought of having gained his riches by accepting the head of the pious King Sri Sangha-Bo.

["Oh, mother dear, it makes me dreadfully sad to think such a good King as Sri Sangha-Bo did not rule any longer than four years in Lanka. I am sure he would have made all the people better by his good example," said Amarawathie, looking up sadly.

"I suppose he was right in sacrificing himself," whispered Anula, "but I am afraid I cannot appreciate such a deed as that; I cannot help thinking he ought to have lived on and ought to have preached as Mahinda did, being such a learned and pious man."

"Well, my dear girls," answered the Mother "it is really a very difficult matter to judge Sri Sangha-Bo's deed. *He* evidently thought that he would gain great merit by his sacrifice. The fact is true, that Sri Sangha-Bo has never been forgotten by the Sinhalese people. His deed is quite fresh in their minds even yet."

“How long ago was that,” asked Yasadhara, who always wanted to know the dates in History.

“King Sri Sangha-Bo reigned about 252 A.D. so from the present time (1911 A.D.) about 1659 years ago.”

“How did his wife, the Queen, stand the dreadful shock of his sudden death, or was he not married”? asked thoughtful Premawattie. “Yes dear,” said the Mother, “he was married, and I will tell you about his queen to-morrow.]

CHAPTER VI.

SRI SANGHA-BO'S QUEEN.

We must now go back in the course of events for a little, in order to see what had happened in Sri Sangha-Bo's household in the palace.

His Queen, who was a lovable, gentle woman, wholly devoted to the King, heard that Sri Sangha-Bo had left Anuradhapura secretly, leaving the city by the Southern gate.

She did not know where he had gone, but basing her search for him on the fact, that he left through the southern gate, she put on some simple clothes as a disguise and also left the city by the same gate.

She imagined that he must have gone to the big jungle in the Máya District, knowing his inclination for solitude.

She was a very delicate and weak person and could go only very slowly. But at last she reached a village in the neighbourhood of the Attanagalla jungle and there she heard to her horror that Sri Sangha-Bo had given away his head to a poor peasant.

Now the unhappy Queen, breaking into loud lamentations, searched for the headless body of her beloved King. Women and boys in the woods, who were gathering firewood, heard her wailings and followed her. So she wandered on, filling the jungle with her cries.

On a little clearing in the forest, covered with white sand and blooming shrubs, she fell down overcome by grief and fatigue.*

Here the unfortunate Queen stayed during the night. The next morning she wandered on. But during the day, in her search, she fell into a little pond almost dead with weariness and sadness, and remained there till refreshed by the coolness of the water she could struggle on again.†

Under the rocks and bushes, in the caves and in the jungle growth, she searched for

* Even after so many hundred years this place is still shown. It is called Wendhembu Vannya (the forest of the widow).

† This place is yet called Nivan Pokkuna as the Pond of Repose for the Queen.

the beloved body, filling the jungle with her moanings and at last she found it all covered flowers! Nodody had disturbed its rest and not even a jackal had touched it.

The poor Queen sank down dead on the headless body of the saintly King with a heart-rending wail! Her heart broke for grief at the loss of him whom she loved and revered like a Saint.

The women and children who had followed her, thought it irreverent to touch these two holy bodies. So they covered them with flowers and put a tent over them to protect them from the fierce rays of the sun and from the rain, and they built a fence round them to guard them against the attacks of wild animals.

Then they sent a message to King Gothabhaya asking him to come and arrange for the burning of their bodies.

King Gothabhaya thinking of his sins and fearing that his subjects would find out about his misdeeds, came at once with a great number of attendants to the Attanagalla jungle.

Here he built a grand funeral pyre of sandal wood, the erection of which he superintended himself. Then an artist had to make a golden head for the headless body of King Sri Sanghabo and he had it decorated with flowers. The bodies of the King and Queen were adorned with costly garments and put on a golden couch. So they were lifted upon the funeral pyre which

the King himself lighted with a torch and stayed near for two days with all his attendants and the people of the nearest villages.

Then when the fire was extinguished, the King had a Dagoba built over the ashes of these two pious people and round this Dagoba was erected a house two storeys high as a protection. When it was finished King Gothabhaya came from Anuradhapura and at the festival, which was celebrated in memory of Sri Sangha-Bo and his Queen, he said: "The Good King Sri Sangha-Bo had *one* parasol of sovereignty over his head when he was King, now that he has passed away, I have made *two* parasols over his ashes and as a crown I have put a golden pinnacle on the Dagoba. So Sri-Sangha-Bo will not be forgotten, but will become the object of veneration for all men."

And King Gothabhaya's words became true! King Sri Sangha-Bo has not been forgotten even now. The Dagoba with its round protecting roof is standing yet, although it has been partly destroyed several times and again rebuilt.

Some later Kings also erected new structures at Attanagala and the ruins found now, show the former splendour.

But not only is Attanagalla itself visited as the spot where Sri Sangha-Bo died, but it is said that miracles have occurred there.

It is also asserted that a dark spot still shown on the rock at present, is the mark of the blood, when it streamed out of Sri-Sangha-Bo's head. This dark spot never fades away, it is said.

So Sri Sangha-Bo has become the religious Martyr King, as Duttu-Gemuuu has become the religious Hero King of the Sinhalese.

And neither of them has been forgotten !

[The girls went away very quietly after the story of Sri Sangha-Bo was finished. They only expressed their thanks, but none of them made any remark. They were very thoughtful and some of them wiped tears from their eyes.]

STORY IX.

KING MAHASSEN.

Tonight my children said the mother I must tell you about a King who at first was wrongly advised by a bad Buddhist Monk who had been his teacher ; but who afterwards, on seeing his mistake, did a great deal of good to his subjects.

This King's name was Mahasen and he was the youngest son of King Gothabhaya, of whom I told you in my last story. This King Mahasen's teacher taught things differently from the real Buddhist teachings and had bad intentions against the good Monks who lived in the Maha-Vihara, which King Devanampiya-Tissa had built for the Priesthood.

This Teacher (Sanghamitta was his name) had such a bad influence upon King Mahasen that he got him to give permission to pull down many beautiful Buddhist Temples and to put all the precious things from the destroyed temples into the Abhayagiri-Vihara, built by King Valagamba and which was the Temple where the Priests were not so strict and taught the same doctrine as were taught by this Priest Sanghamitta.

In this way three hundred Buddhist buildings were destroyed and the Sinhalese people felt very unhappy.

At last one of the Ministers of the King,

named Maghavannabhaya left the court of the King secretly and went to Ruhuna, where he collected an army and he marched against Anuradhapura to try and dethrone the King.

He used to love King Mahasen very much and this was very hard for him, but he could not bear any longer to see the beautiful Buddhist buildings being pulled down and the Buddhist religion taught wrongly.

When the two armies, of the King and the Minister, were encamped for battle opposite each other, something happened which changed the whole situation and brought the King back to his senses. It came about thus: some friend of the Minister brought him a very savoury dish of food, which he liked very much. When he was just about to enjoy eating it, he remembered that King Mahasen was very fond of this same dish. He thought, "the King used to love me, I will forget his wrong doings for a little while and offer him some of this delicious food."

So Maghavannabhaya, went over to the King's camp in the night, quite alone and offered the King some of his favourite dish. The King accepted it and both sat down in the King's tent on a mat which was spread over a splendid carpet and enjoyed their meal together.

When the meal was over the King became aware of the peculiar situation and asked the Minister: "Tell me, why have you turned traitor against me? You used to love me and

that you love me yet you have proved, by coming over into my camp all alone, where I could capture and kill you very easily if I wanted to." "Yes" answered the Minister "I know you could kill me if you wanted to, but I know also that you will not do it, otherwise you would not have accepted my food. You want to know why I wish to take the throne away from you? I will tell you: Because you have destroyed the Maha-Vihare and you have pulled down other sacred buildings, you have made your subjects very unhappy and so we must try to find another King."

King Mahasen became very much ashamed of himself, when he heard the frank and true reproach of his Minister. He admired the Minister too, who dared to speak so plainly to him and he answered, "Will you pardon me my offences if I re-establish the Maha-Vihare and try to make up as much as I can for the wrong I have done?"

The Minister was very happy when he heard this, made friends at once with the King and dismissed his army.

The King really kept his word, which became easier for him, as the bad Priest Sanghamitta was murdered, just when he intended to pull down the Thuparama, which Devanampiya-Tissa had built.

Now King Mahasen became a changed man. He rebuilt the Maha-Vihare, and restored the Brazen-Palace. He also began

to build the splendid Jetawanarama and many other Dagobas.

But his greatest work was the construction of sixteen tanks, of which the *Kantalai* and the *Minneriya Tanks* between Dambulla and Trincomalee were the largest. They watered a great many paddy-fields, so that prosperity came back to Ceylon.

Now the people forgot all his former evil deeds, and after King Mahasen died, they built a shrine near the Minneriya Tank and honoured him like a God. The remains of this shrine are to be found even to this day.

[“ I consider that the Minister Maghavan-nabhaya was a very courageous and good man otherwise he would not have gone into the King’s camp all alone and at night. How kind it was to think of the King and bring him his own food, when the King had treated the minister so badly !” said quiet Tillaka. “ His name ought not to be forgotten in History, for through his kindness of heart, King Mahasen’s whole life was changed. And he did so much good to the Sinhalese after that.”

“ I think myself my children, that such a thing has not happend very often before, and will not happen again perhaps, therefore let us not forget the good Minister’s name, although it is a hard name to remember,” All the girls laughed.

“Dear mother please tell us a little more about tanks. I have never seen any, as we have none in Colombo. Are they not something like our lakes here?” asked Yasodhara.

“Have none of you seen a tank. asked the mother?”

“Yes, mother, I have seen the tanks in Anuradhapura, when I was there” said Rissie. They looked to me almost like lakes, anyhow the large tanks did, the Nuwara-Vewa and the Tissa-Vewa.”

“Well,” said the mother, they are artificial lakes made from streams, the water of which is kept back by great banks called ‘bunds.’ An opening is built in each bund, called a slinge, closed by very strong gates or shutters, so that when dry weather comes the water of the tank can be let out to run along channels or water courses to the fields where crops are sown.

“In olden times these tanks were in such perfect order, that the cultivators could open a slinge and turn on the water and have their paddy-fields watered, whenever they needed water. And therefore Ceylon was very fertile and the people were content.

“There were at one time more than six thousand tanks in Ceylon.

But when the tanks were destroyed or fell into disuse by neglect and the irrigation system (as we call this artificial water system) got in disorder, the paddy-fields dried up and the people became poor.

“ At present some of the best tanks have been restored and since then a great many more paddy-fields are seen in Ceylon. The British Government has done a great deal for the restoration of the tanks and we ought to be very grateful for it.

“ Very early in Ceylon History, you hear of the Kings constructing tanks. I think it was King Pandukhabhaya (whose story I am sure you remember), who made the first big tanks and afterwards the King Tissa, and Duttu-Gemunu did the same.”

“ The tanks which were constructed by Mahasen were specially valuable for the country and therefore the people almost worshipped him like a God.”

“ Thanks very much, dear mother ” exclaimed the girls ; “ We understand now, as you have made it so clear, and we know now how useful tanks really are ” !]



STORY X.

**KING BUDDHADASA
THE GREAT PHYSICIAN.**

About forty-years after King Mahasen's death, there ruled a King in Lanka named Buddhadasa (341—370 A.D). He was so devoted to religion that he was called the 'Slave of Buddha.' But he was not only very pious and benevolent, but he was also a very famous physician and surgeon. Always when he drove out or rode out on his state-elephant, he carried a case of surgical instruments with him in the folds of his waist-cloth. And so he was always ready to help whomsoever he met, whether human being or animal.

There are many little stories told of him how he applied his skill as a physician and I must tell you some of them.

One day, when King Buddhadasa was riding on his state-elephant on the way to the Tissavewa-Tank, where he wanted to bathe, he saw a snake, a King-cobra, stretched out on a huge white ant-hill. The snake lay there as straight as a pole and seemed to be suffering from some internal trouble. The King got down from his elephant and in his compassion addressed the snake thus :

“ I see that thou art suffering and I would like to help thee, if thou wert not inclined to bite me in thy sudden attacks of rage. How

can I touch thee without being hurt by thee ? ” The snake seemed to understand the King’s words, put its head into a hole in the ant-hill and lay quite still, so that the King could take his instruments out, open the snake’s body, take out a diseased part, apply some healing ointment, and thus the snake was cured.

It is said that in gratitude the snake gave the King a very precious gem, which he set in the eye of a stone statue in the Abhayagiri-Temple.

Tradition says again, that he cured a Monk who was so afflicted with rheumatism that he was quite crippled. No doctor could cure him and so his fellow-monks applied to the Rajah and in a short time the Monk was cured by the skill of his treatment.

Another wonderful cure is related in the Mahavansa and that is : A man had swallowed some frog spawn with the water which he drank from a pond and one of the frog’s eggs had entered his nose and had got up into his head. There it had hatched out and in rainy weather the frog was croaking and gnawing in the man’s head. The King skilfully cut the man’s head open, took the frog out, closed the wound and used such good ointment that it was healed very soon.

More similar cures Buddhadasa is said to have made and he was always so successful in them that the sick people began to crowd his palace. So in his good heartedness and because he could not possibly attend to

everybody, he built hospitals and taught and employed medical men in all the larger villages and very often he inspected the hospitals himself and saw that the patients were well attended.

He then began to write a book on medical science, (Sararthasangraha) and his physicians had to study it. And this book, written in Sanscrit, exists even to the present time and it is still consulted.

Buddhadasa also founded Asylums for the crippled and blind and incurables and he provided for their support. I will tell you how he cured a leper.

One day the King was seen on his state-elephant in a procession, attired in all his royal garments and with the parasol of sovereignty over his head. The crowds of people cheered and hailed him, but one poor leper behaved in the strangest way when he saw the King. He beat the ground with his staff furiously and called out that he could kill the King in a few days and would show what he really was.

He behaved like a madman, always abusing the King. The King wondered when he saw this strange behaviour, what he had done to this poor man. He thought that he had always been just and kind to everybody, and could not understand why this *one* man should hate him so much. So when he returned to his palace, after the procession, he asked one of

his attendants to find out why that leper was so angry with him.

The King's attendant went to the leper, sat down near him and inquired into the cause of his anger. The leper, who evidently had lost his reason, said : " This King Buddhadasa was in a former birth my slave and now that he has become a King by his piety, he is parading himself before me on an elephant to insult me. In a few days I shall show him what he really is. I will get him into my power and I will degrade him before I kill him ! "

The attendant, pretending that he also intended to kill the King and that he wanted the beggar to be his assistant, took him to his house. He treated him like a friend, took very good care of him, gave him good food and had him attended to by a clever physician, so that very soon his health improved and also his temper.

One day when the patient received some specially nice food, the King's minister told him that all this good treatment for him had been ordered by the King. At first the leper was beside himself and would not take any more food, but when he became more reasonable and saw that the King really meant him to be treated as a friend and that he only wanted to do him good, the poor man became such a devoted subject to King Buddhadasa, that he died of grief, when he heard one day a false rumour, that the King had been killed.

Buddhadasa reigned for twenty-nine years and under him Lanka was in peace and prosperity. He passed away blessed by his subjects and deeply mourned.

["How wonderful," said Chitra, "that so many years ago there were already such skilful physicians! I would have liked to see how the King operated on the snake. How kind that he even cured the animals!

"Yes" said Susima, "he must have been very good, for surely no one would have treated the leper as he did. I admire Buddhadasa very much."

"You are quite right, my little girl," said the mother, "Buddhadasa had a very good heart and he deserves to be remembered."]

TWO FAMOUS VISITORS.

["Before I tell you my next story, my children," said the mother the following evening "I must mention that, during the reign of Buddhadasa's second son Mahanama, two very well-known visitors came to Ceylon. They were the Chinese Traveller Fa-Hian and the Hindu Sage Buddhaghosa.

By this time, about 400 A.D., Lanka was not only famous on account of its jewels,

but literature, arts and sciences also flourished and the distinguished traveller Fa-Hian had heard in China, about beautiful Lanka and about the magnificent Buddhist Dagobas and Viharas and he came to see for himself whether all this was true.

He came to Anuradhapura and admired the city very much. In his writings he speaks about the white shining domes of the Dagobas, about the beautiful palaces with their parks, about the five thousand priests who lived in Anuradhapura and about the splendour of the Court of the King of Lanka.

The other famous visitor, Buddhaghosa, was a Brahman youth, who lived near the Holy Bhodi-tree* (the present Buddha-Gaya) in India. He had learnt a great deal in his Hindu Scriptures and he was wandering around in Magadha in India, preaching and having discussions with other Priests.

One night he was rehearsing some Hindu stanzas aloud, when he was heard by a Buddhist Priest named Revata who thought that this Brahman youth promised to become a great scholar.

He made his acquaintance and explained the Buddhist teachings to him and asked him to go to Lanka and translate some of the

* A branch of this Bhodi-tree had been brought to Anuradhapura by the Nun Sanghamitta, the daughter of the Indian King Asoka, during the reign of King Devanampiya-Tissa. See Book 1 page 118.

Buddhist Scriptures into the Pali language. The Brahman youth followed Revata's advice, he came to Lanka, lived three years in Anuradhapura in the Maha-Vihare, studied Sinhalese there and wrote the work called the Visuddhimagga.

He became so famous through his eloquence that he was called Buddhaghosa (the voice of Buddha). His translations and writings form a part of the Buddhist sacred books now.

He wrote his Commentaries on the Buddhist Scriptures in a College attached to the Maha-Vihara in Anuradhapura.

There is a curious story told about how he wrote his famous Commentaries, and I will tell it to you my children. You will remember I hope, that during the reign of King Valagamba an assembly of five-hundred Priests met at the Alu-Vihara, near Matale, (about 76 B.C.) and there the Tripitaka or part of the Buddhist Scriptures, were written down with Commentaries and Notes. Buddhaghosa wanted to see these in order to translate them into Pali. But the Monks were suspicious of him, as he was a Hindu and they gave him only a very small part of the Tripitaka, saying that they had no more. Buddhaghosa went to work and wrote a splendid translation and commentary. But strange to say, when he wanted to read it to the Monks, it disappeared. He wrote it over, but it disappeared again. For the third time he

re-wrote it and then, when he called the Monks together to read to them his Pali translation, lo ! the two former writings, which had disappeared, came forth also. In comparing the three versions, it was found that all the three were exactly alike, not even a word was changed, although they had been written quite independently of each other.

Now the Sinhalese Monks believed in Buddhagosa's inspiration and let him have all the Buddhist writings, which he wanted to have."

"And now to my story."]

STORY XI.

KING DHATUSENA.

CHAPTER I.

GOOD WORKS.

After king Mahanama's death there were again many troubles in Lanka. Several weak Kings were murdered and the Tamils taking advantage of this state of affairs, came over again from South India and took possession of Lanka for about twenty-five years. Most of the prominent Sinhalese fled to Ruhuna and joined those who had gone there before. It was one of the Princes of the Royal house, who had lived in Ruhuna for some time, who succeeded after a long struggle in getting three of the six Tamil Chiefs, (who had taken possession of the greater part of Lanka), killed and in driving the Tamils out of the Island.

Then Dhatusena, (that was the name of this Prince), took the reins of Government into his own hands and soon better order was restored.

He erected twenty-one forts along the Western coast to keep invaders out of the Island, and he rebuilt a great many of the Buddhist buildings, which had been damaged by the Tamils.

His best work for Lanka was the construction of eighteen tanks of which the splendid Kalawewa, is the most important. This tank was very large and gave a splendid water supply to Anuradhapura and irrigated hundreds of acres of paddy-land in the vicinity.

It was Dhatusena's uncle, the learned Priest Mahanama, who wrote the famous History of Lanka, "The Mahavansa," from which most of the stories I am telling you, my children, are taken. He belonged to the Brother-hood of the Maha-Vihara and we owe him a debt of gratitude, because if he had not written the Mahavansa, we would not know much of what had happened in Ceylon so many years ago.

Dhatusena was really a very good King, and he did so much for Buddhism that he has sometimes been compared with King Asoka. (You remember, I hope, that it was King Asoka who sent his son Mahinda and his daughter Sanghamitta to Ceylon to teach King Devanampiya-Tissa and his subjects the Buddha-Dharma.)

The good King Dhatusena came by his death in a very cruel and dreadful way and I cannot help being very sad that after a life of such usefulness and kindness he should have met with such an end.

He had two sons, Kasyapa and Mugalan and it was his eldest son Kasyapa who had him killed.

["Is it really possible, that a son could have his father killed," exclaimed Yasodhara quite horrified.

"Well my child, I am sorry to say that, that is really the fact! I will tell you the story of King Dhatusena's death."]

CHAPTER II.

KING DHATUSENA'S CRUEL DEATH.

Dhatusena had a lovely daughter, whom he had given in marriage to his nephew. But this Prince did not treat her properly and one day he struck her so violently that the wound bled profusely. When she came to her father and he saw that she had been treated so badly without cause, he became very angry. To punish the nephew, King Dhatusena did something very dreadful, which I hardly like to relate. But as it became the cause of the hatred of the nephew and indirectly the cause of Dhatusena's death, I must tell you.

Dhatusena took his nephew's mother, who most probably was also in fault for the bad treatment of his daughter, and he had her burnt to death. That was a very cruel and

terrible deed and Dhatusena repented it, but then it was too late.

His nephew was so enraged against King Dhatusena, that he tried every thing to turn the heart of the King's son Kasyapa against his father, in which he succeeded. Kasyapa and his cousin then plotted together, and with some evil disposed persons made the old King Dhatusena a prisoner and had himself crowned as King.

Kasyapa at once made his cousin his General and this angry man now tried his best to make Kasyapa more and more angry against his father.

One day he said to Kasyapa, that his father had hidden most of his treasures and had not given them to him, because he was keeping them for his younger son Mugalan, whom he loved better than Kasyapa.

King Kasyapa, now sent messengers to old King Dhatusena who was in prison and ordered him to give up the treasures. The old King answered that he had none. Again and again the General urged Kasyapa to make the old King give up the treasures, till Dhatusena got so tired, that he answered the messenger: "Tell my son, the King, that if he will let me go to my Kalawewa tank which I constructed, I will point out the treasures to him."

Very gladly Kasyapa sent a broken down chariot to take the old King to his best tank,



(All rights reserved.)

"They bathed in the tank and then they ate their food together,"

(To face page 141.)

in hopes that now the lost treasures were also to be his.

When the old King arrived at the Kalawewa tank, he found to his great comfort, his uncle the Priest Mahanama there, (the same who wrote the Mahavansa) who had heard that Dhatusena was coming to the tank.

Mahanama loved the old King very much and he came there to comfort him. He had brought for the King his favourite food, specially prepared, and there at the bank of the beautiful tank, the greatest work of Dhatusena, the two old friends Dhatusena and Mahanama sat down together and tried to comfort each other.

They bathed in the tank and then they ate their food together and for a time they forgot all their troubles.

Dhatusena felt glad, that the good he had done in constructing this useful tank, would live after him and now he was ready to die, for he felt that his end was near.

He returned to his prison, sending word to his son Kasyapa, that he had no other treasures but his Kalawewa tank.

Kasyapa now became so angry that he ordered the General (his cousin) to kill his father.

This was just what this wicked man wanted. He attired himself in his General's uniform and paraded up and down before King Dhatusena in his prison, in order to

taunt him, because the old King was clothed in soiled, torn garments, and he himself was decked with jewels.

But the old King gently said: "I consider you with the same feelings, as I do my son Mugalan." The general laughed in his face, when he heard that and now Dhatusena knew that he had to die.

After taunting him for a long time the general had the old King chained on to the wall of his prison, turning his face to the East and there he had him walled up alive, so that he had to die of suffocation and starvation.

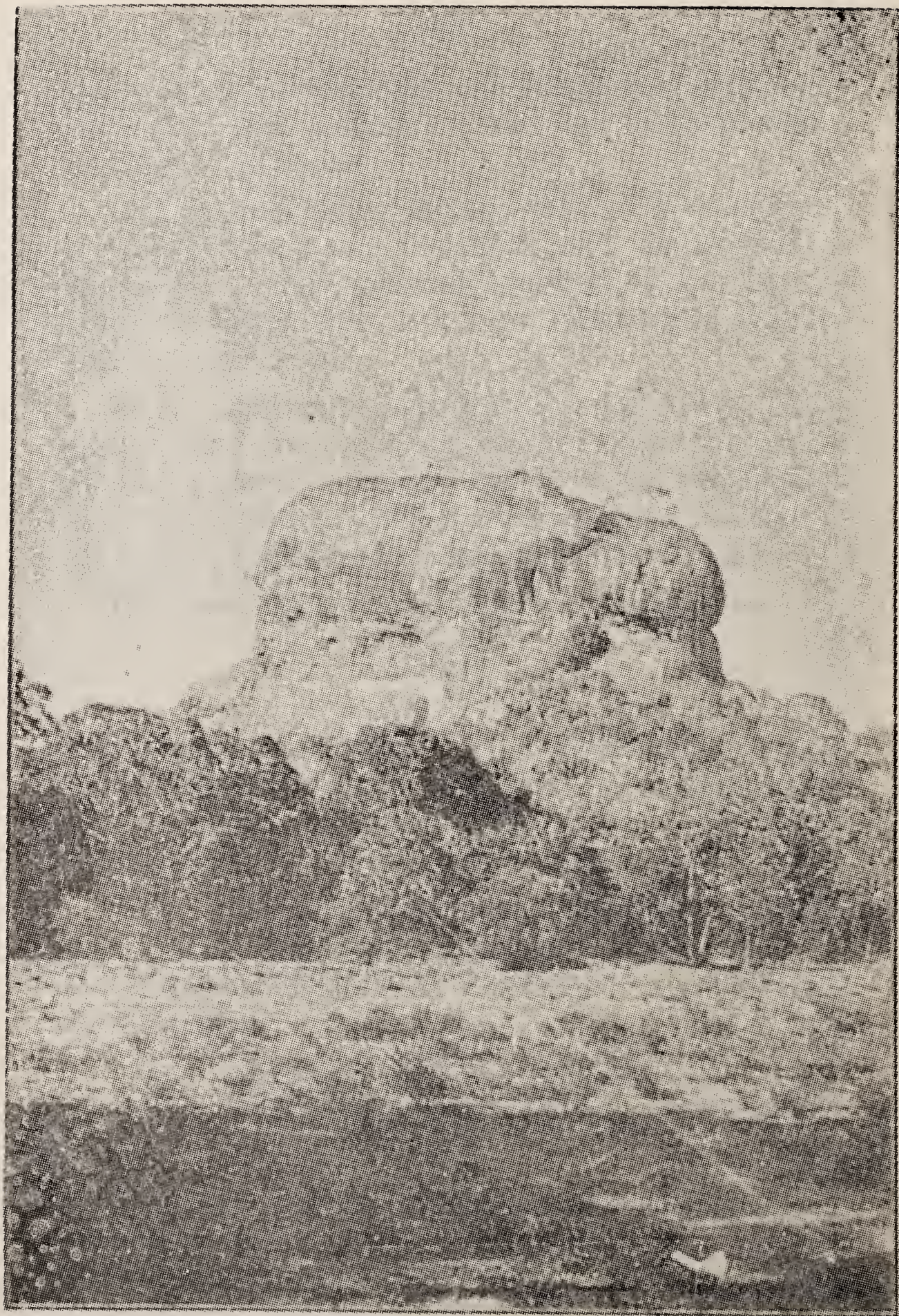
This was the sad end of King Dhatusena.

["That was dreadful," cried all the girls, "how could Kasyapa allow his father to be killed in this dreadful manner! Surely he could not have a moment's peace after such a deed!"]

"No, I do not think, that Kasyapa could have led a happy life after this black deed" said the mother. "You will hear soon what his end was."

"But where was King Dhatusena's son Mugalan, whom he loved so much?" asked Chitra.

"He had fled to India, to try and gather an army, as he could not prevent this cruel deed," answered the mother.]



The Sigiriya Rock.

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STORY XII.

KING KASYAPA.

Kasyapa, although he was now king and his father was dead, could not find any rest, as you can well understand, for how could he be happy when he had killed his own father? He became very suspicious and afraid of everybody, specially of his brother Mugalan who had fled to India to collect an army, in order to fight against Kasyapa.

So he left Anuradhapura, fearing that he would not be safe there and moved his residence to a big rock at the extreme north of the Central Province, a good many miles away from Anuradhapura, which was so hard to climb, that he could feel quite secure there. This rock received the name of Sigiriya (lion's rock) because Kasyapa adorned the steps which led to the summit with two giant lions.

He had the rock cleared of vegetation and built a beautiful Palace on the top of it. He also built a wall round it and beautiful gardens and water reservoirs and secret passages and picture galleries. It became so strong and inaccessible, that he could live there quite safely.

How skilful the architects and the artists were already at that time, is shown by the ruins which are left on the rock up to the present time.

Here to the Sigiriya Rock (or Sigiri) Kasyapa brought all his treasures and lived there with his whole household. He tried to quiet the voice of his conscience by building Viharas, hospitals and tanks; but punishment reached him after a reign of eighteen years.

His brother Mugalan came against him with an army. If Kasyapa had remained in his fortress Sigiriya, he could not have been conquered, but he was persuaded to meet his brother in battle near Kurunegala.

Luck seemed to be with him at first, but his elephant, in trying to avoid a swamp, drew back and his soldiers thought that Kasyapa was giving up the battle.

His men deserted him and joined Mugalan's army whom they loved better anyhow and Kasyapa was left alone, knowing very well that his brother would avenge his father's death. So he cut his own throat and died seated on his elephant.

Now Mugalan became King. He removed his Capital again to Anuradhapura and he gave the Sigiriya rock to his great uncle Mahanama as a Vihare (the same who wrote the Mahavansa.) He ruled for eighteen years and restored order in Lanka.

[“Is that the Sigiri, on the top of which ruins of Palaces and other buildings have lately been found and where they even dis-

covered painting in a cave half way up the rock ? ” asked a grown up girl, who had taken a great deal of interest in Ceylon History.

“ Yes, dear,” answered the mother, “ it is the same rock. Kasyapa although a very wicked man, knew how to have his fortress beautified and architects of the present day and artists who understand these matters, have much admired what they have found there ” !!]

[“ Now my children,” said the mother the next day, “ we have arrived at a period in Ceylon History, where it is very difficult for me to find stories. But I will tell you whatever seems interesting and what will be necessary for you to know.

“ After King Mugalan died Ceylon was in a better condition for a while. Literature and Art were encouraged and Poets flourished. His own son Kumaradasa was himself a great poet and it will perhaps interest you to hear that he wrote the *Janakiharana*, i.e. the story of Rama and Sita.

“ This book is still to be found in the form of a poem, but it is written in such difficult language, that only very few Sinhalese can read it. Therefore it would be a very good thing if my story of Sita and Rama were translated into simple Sinhalese language, so that all my Sinhalese daughters, who do not

know English, could read it in Sinhalese. You, my grown up daughters, who know Sinhalese so well, ought to do this work. You, really ought to translate *all* the stories, which I have been telling you in English, into simple Sinhalese. Thus you could give a great deal of pleasure to your brothers and sisters in the villages, who cannot understand English. If I knew Sinhalese well, I would do it myself, but that is quite out of the question. So think of this, my children, and go to work about the translation into Sinhalese of the 'Stories from the History of Ceylon' which you have heard." *

"But now I will tell you the story of two great friends, the one was a King and the other a Poet, so listen."]

* This has since been done. See the Sinhalese edition of the "Stories from the History of Ceylon."

STORY XIII.

**KING KUMARADASA AND
POET KALIDASA.**

King Kumaradasa, the son of King Mugalan, was a good poet, as you have already heard. He wrote other poems besides the Janaki-harana, but these are at present almost forgotten.

He had a great friend in the person of a poet named Kalidasa. This Kalidasa was a very famous poet, who lived at the court of an Indian King called Boja.

King Kumaradasa had sent his poem "The Janakiharana" written on ola leaves to this same Indian King, who was himself a learned man and who appreciated literary ability.

According to the Indian custom, the Janakiharana, sent by King Kumaradasa, was tied on the tail of King Boja's state elephant and taken thus in procession through the streets of his capital.

At that time the poet Kalidasa was very highly esteemed by King Boja as an eminent poet. He saw the procession and asked to see the poem which was carried around in this manner. He only read the first lines, but he was so much pleased with it that he placed the poem on his head and carried it round himself.

After reading the whole poem he became so anxious to make the acquaintance of the Sin-

halese King, who had written such beautiful poetry, that he left King Boja's Court and came to Ceylon.

Arrived in Ceylon, he presented himself at once to King Kumaradasa and very soon both these poets became greatly attached to each other, and they were very often seen together. Kalidasa soon mastered the Sinhalese language and composed Sinhalese poetry as well as he had done Indian poetry before.

But of course eminent people generally have not only admirers and friends, but they have also enemies and a good many people are jealous of their great name. This jealousy was the cause of the poet Kalidasa's untimely and early death.

It happened thus : King Kumaradasa used to pay frequent visits to Matara and when he was there he always stayed in a certain beautiful house. During one of these visits he wrote two lines of unfinished poetry on the wall of the room where he had lived. Under it he wrote, that the person who could finish this piece of poetry satisfactorily, would receive a high reward from the King.

The poet Kalidasa happened to see these lines, when he came to this house in Matara and he wrote two lines of splendid poetry under the unfinished poetry of the King. He was in hopes that his friend, King Kumaradasa would be well pleased with this and would recognize his friend's poetry.

But the unfortunate poet had not the

pleasure of getting either reward or praise from the King, because the authorship of this poetry was claimed by a woman in the same house, who had seen that the poet Kalidasa had written these verses.

She secretly murdered Kalidasa and claimed the reward, stating that the poetry was her own.

But nobody would believe that the woman could have written such poetry, which could have only been the work of a real poet.

The King, when he saw the lines of poetry said that nobody but his friend Kalidasa would be able to understand him so well and to complete in such an excellent way the poetry which he (the King) had written and he asked where Kalidasa was, so that he could hand to him the promised reward. Nobody knew where he was and at last search was made everywhere and to the great sorrow of every-body his body, which had been hidden, was found.

You can hardly imagine how sad King Kumaradasa was, when he heard that Kalidasa had been murdered, for he had loved him so much, both as a poet and as a friend.

A very grand funeral-pyre was erected and the King lit the pyre with his own hand.

When King Kumaradasa saw the body of his dear friend being consumed by the flames, he lost his senses altogether through his great grief, and to the horror of all the people assembled, he threw himself on the body

of Kalidasa, on the funeral-pyre, and was burnt to death together with his friend.

Thus ended the lives of these two great friends the King and the Poet, who were united in death, when they could not be together in life any longer.

[“ King Kumaradasa must have loved his friend very much, to kill himself of grief for him. Did he forget altogether that he was a *King*, and had he not to think of *all* his subjects and not only of *one* friend ? ” said thoughtful Mangala ! ”

“ My dear Mangala,” said the mother, “ you have expressed just my feelings. I think also that a King ought to think of *all* his subjects and not only of *one*, even if he were his dearest friend. Kings ought to remember that they are not private persons and that their life belongs to the nation and not to themselves,

“ It was certainly not good for Lanka, that Kumaradasa died after only nine years of reign ; for his son Kirtisena was very young and besides he was murdered by his uncle Siva after nine months’ reign.

“ I will not speak to you children of all the troubles which arose in Lanka now. I will only briefly say that most of the Kings who reigned after him were unimportant or were weak in character. Only one King has been

praised highly by the historians and he was Agbo I. (564—598) He reigned for thirty-four years, during which time he restored and maintained order. He protected the poets and encouraged the artists, who in spite of all troubles flourished during this period.

“ But after the death of King Agbo I. for about a hundred years, with the exception of one King, Agbo IV. (673—689) the Kings could neither control their own chiefs, nor the Tamils, who became more and more powerful. They had settled in Ceylon, mostly in the Northern part, and had gained wealth and position.

“ One of the Tamil generals was even powerful enough to be able to put two Sinhalese Princes on the throne, one after the other; he being in reality the ruler, and the Kings only the figure-heads, for they had no real power.

“ Luckily for Lanka then, there lived a Prince of the Royal house, son of a former King Kasyapa II.* who had died when all his children were yet young. This Prince came as a deliverer, like Prince Duttu-Gemunu of old. He did not become nearly as great a King as Duttu-Gemunu had been, but this Prince, Manavamma by name, loved his Native Island so much that he served an Indian King for many years, in order to become able, with his help, to collect an army and take possession of Ceylon.

“ I will tell you his story and I will call it. ‘The Faithful Friend.’ ”]

* Not the parricide Kasyapa.

STORY XIV

THE FAITHFUL FRIEND.

Prince Manavamma had lost his father, King Kasyapa II, while he was very young. He was brought up with his brothers and sisters in a simple way in Ruhuna by his mother, with the help of one of his uncles.

Nobody thought that Prince Manavamma, who was the eldest of his brothers and sisters, would become a very remarkable man, as he was very quiet and thoughtful. But he brooded a great deal over the sad fate of his beloved Lanka, where there seemed nothing but disorder and discontent.

When Manavamma was grown up, he married Sangha, the daughter of the Rajah of Malaya.* He went with her to the North of Lanka, where he lived unknown.

When King Hattha-Datha (who reigned at that time in Ceylon) heard of him, he was afraid that Prince Manavamma would make himself too popular with the people and would plan to depose him and so he tried to have him killed. But Manavamma was warned and he fled to India, leaving his wife with her relatives.

In India Prince Manavamma went to the Court of a King called Narasiha and entered into his service. King Narasiha and Prince Manavamma became very good friends, for the

* Mountainous District in Ruhuna.



"Leaving some of the water in the coconut, King Narasiha handed it to Prince Manawammy."
(All rights reserved.)

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Prince served the King faithfully by day and night.

After a little time King Narasiha allowed Prince Manavamma to bring his wife over to India and both lived quite contentedly at the Court of the Indian King, being treated almost as equals by King Narasiha and his household.

For the time being Manavamma was quite happy and contented, but his aim was, that after some years of faithful service, King Narasiha should reward him by sending an army under his command to Lanka, so that he could gain possession of the throne, which belonged to him by right of birth. With this wish in his heart he did all he could to prove his love and devotion to the Indian King.

One day the two Royal friends went out on a pleasure trip together on their elephants.

It became very hot in the middle of the day, as the palm-trees did not give sufficient shade, and the sun burned down on them very hotly, as the Indian sun is wont to do.

The King became very thirsty and asked one of his attendants to get him a young coconut from one of the surrounding palms.

His orders were promptly obeyed and King Narasiha quenched his thirst with the delightfully cool *kurumba* water (young coconut water). Leaving some of the water in the coconut he handed it to some one behind him, (without looking around) with the re-

mark to finish up the remainder, as it was very refreshing.

It was Prince Manavamma, to whom he had handed the coconut, but the King was not aware of it.

Manavamma took the coconut without a word and drank some of the remaining water, wondering whether the King knew to whom he had offered the remainder of the coconut.

If he considered Prince Manavamma his equal, then he could not offer him the remainder of his food, for this is quite against Indian etiquette, still, knowing this custom, Manavamma had the confidence that the King had not wanted to insult him and he drank the offered coconut-water.

The next moment the King looked round and saw to whom he had given the coconut and that his friend had not refused the offer, although it looked like an offence: "What can I do to make up for this mistake?" thought the King. Quickly he took the same coconut from the hand of the Prince and he himself finished what was left in it.

With this act he proved at once that he considered Manavamma his equal; he thus raised him to his own rank, and from this time their friendship was sealed for ever.

A short time after this incident, an Indian King, called Vallabha, came and attacked King Narasiha.

Narasiha would have liked to have Prince Manavamma help him in fighting against

this King, but he did not want to ask him, for he thought: "If my friend should get killed in this war, then he could not have his great wish fulfilled of regaining his own country Lanka. I must go to war alone."

Manavamma appreciated the King's considerate thought, but he himself was not of his opinion for he thought thus: "King Narasiha has been so very good to me all these years, and it is my duty to help him. Besides if he should lose his country or should be killed, then he could not help me and I would have no friend. Then, there would be no use in my living any more. I will help him to conquer his enemy or die with him."

So Manavamma collected a large army and joined the King's soldiers with his warriors. The King was very glad and it was indeed possible for him with the help of his friend to win the battle and again to sit safely on his throne.

King Narasiha was so grateful to Manavamma, that he decided at once to show his appreciation by giving him a large army with which he might go over to Lanka and gain his own crown.

Manavamma crossed over to Lanka with the army given to him by his friend King Narasiha and began conquering the Northern part of it. When Datha-Patissa, (who was then King in Lanka) heard of his arrival, he fled and Manavamma entered Anuradhapura.

But instead of staying there long enough to

be crowned as King, Manavamma pursued Datha-Patissa. He left the greater part of his Indian army in Anuradhapura and took only a few soldiers with him. That was a very great mistake, for while he was away, a rumour spread that he had fallen seriously ill. Then his army deserted him. He had to give up his whole scheme, as his army had left him, when he returned to Anuradhapura. He returned secretly to India and he began again to serve King Narasiha as before, with the hope that the King would trust him later on again with an army.

Many years Prince Manavamma served King Narasiha as faithfully as before. It is said that during this time, four Kings reigned in Lanka and he almost gave up the idea of ever being able to become King of Lanka.

But King Narasiha saw that his friend was grieving and that if his wish were not fulfilled soon, he would die. So he called his Council together and spoke thus: "My friend Manavamma is getting old in my service and he is so anxious to gain his kingdom. I must give him a second army to conquer Lanka."

The ministers agreed with the King, but the King's soldiers were not willing to go over to Lanka without their King.

And so King Narasiha asked Manavamma to take his Royal ornaments and his Royal war-drum, get on one of the ships and sound the drum from there, while King Narasiha hid himself on shore.

Manavamma did according to the King's advice. He sounded the war-drum on board the ship, and King Narasiha's army, thinking that their King called them, got on the war-ships and sailed over to Lanka.

Arrived there, Manavamma did wonders of bravery and scattered his enemies in a short time.

King Hathadata II 'the reigning King' fled and was killed by the Sinhalese country-people.

Now Manavamma was crowned at Anuradhapura and he reigned wisely for thirty-five years, doing much good. He built many sacred buildings, repaired others, which had been injured and kept Lanka in order.

Through his wise rule Lanka was in a better state for a time and the five Kings who succeeded him were able to successfully maintain order.

But in the meanwhile the Tamils had become so powerful, that Agbo VII. (A. D. 781—787) was obliged to give up Anuradhapura as his capital and remove to Polonnaruwa which began to grow into a large and beautiful city.

"At last, there was a wise King," sighed Amarawattie. I was getting quite sad, because there did not seem to be any remarkable King in Lanka for such a long time. Please, dear

mother, about what year are we now in History ? ”

“ King Manavamma died 726 A. D., ” answered the mother, “ and I am sorry I have to tell you some more sad things, before we come to another great King. ”

“ Oh, I do not think the stories now are half as nice as they were at first, ” called out impudent little Somawattie. “ At first you told us about golden boats and giants and beautiful Asoka-Mala, and now !—Well they are not so interesting. ”

“ Well, my little girl, how do you think I can tell you interesting stories, when no interesting things have happened ? Look here ! I am telling you stories from *History*, I do not *make up* the stories and so you will have to be satisfied with what I can tell you. ”

Somarawattie felt a little ashamed, when she received that answer and she saw that she was wrong. She came up to the mother and said pleadingly : “ Please excuse me, dear mother, I will try to remember that you are not *making* the stories from Ceylon History but that you *tell* us what has happened in our country long ago. I am sure we are learning something from all the stories you tell us, even if they are not as pretty as some of the former ones. ”]

AGBO, THE DUTIFUL

About a hundred years later there lived a King in Lanka, 816—827 A.D. who ought not to be forgotten, as he was an example of piety and filial love to his mother. The Mahavansa says that with his reign he bestowed the blessings of health and happiness on all living beings.

His name was Agbo, and he was the eighth of this name. We will call him "Agbo the Dutiful."

He was a very good hearted King and whatever he did he showed in it the kindness of his heart and his devotion to his religion and his mother. He was very simple in his life and gave in this respect also a good example to his subjects.

In order to reform customs and manners in general, he forbade the eating of flesh and fish and the drinking of strong drinks on religious festival-days and he himself strictly observed these rules.

To his mother he showed such veneration, that he is always spoken of as a pattern of dutifulness.

The Mahavansa says, he constantly attended to her wants by day and night, anointed her head with oil, washed her feet, clothed her with clean and soft garments, even washed her

clothes himself. He made offerings of flowers to her and bowed down to her reverently. He fed her with the daintiest food with his own hands and ate the remnants himself. He attended to her bedroom himself and laid out her bed carefully, anointed her feet with sweet smelling oil, after washing them and then he sat down near her bed, till she was asleep. Then he walked round her bed three times and bowed to the place where she lay. On leaving her, he commanded her servants to attend to her carefully. All this he did constantly during her lifetime.

To show his good nature, another little story is told in the Mahavansa about him.

Once King Agbo VIII. became annoyed with one of his attendants and he talked rather roughly to him. He even called him "slave," so that the man went away very sadly.

After a while the King, thinking over his words and the insult he had offered his faithful servant, became sorry and thought how he could make up for the wrong he had done.

He wanted to know what his feelings would be if he were called "slave" and so he persuaded his mother to offer him as a slave to the priesthood. This she did and now the King became doubly sad, about his behaviour towards his attendant because he knew now what it was to be called a *slave*.

He bought back his liberty by paying a large sum of money to the Temple.

Then he gave a sum of money to his insulted servant, and employed him from that time as his special attendant.

In this way he made up for his ill-temper.

During the whole of his reign, he always tried to be just and kind and liberal!

Because of the devotion he showed to his mother, the title of "The Dutiful" was given to him.

[Little Somawattie wanted to make up for her naughty remarks the evening before and said: "Dear Mother, I was very glad to hear that King Agbo loved his mother so much, and I think this story even if it were only short was quite pretty."

"Thank you, dear," said the mother, "I am glad that you liked the little story. But I am afraid, you will be disappointed again to-morrow, for I have to tell you something very sad."]

THE DESTRUCTION OF ANURADHAPURA.

The Tamils had been very busy settling themselves safely in Lanka, during many years, and soon after King Agbo VIII.'s death, King Sena I. (his third successor who reigned from 846—866 A. D.) was compelled to give up Anuradhapura as his capital altogether. Then he chose Polonnaruwa as his capital which had been built up in the meanwhile by some of the Kings. Polonnaruwa remained capital of Lanka for the following one hundred and fifty years, and then later on again for more than one hundred years.

King Sena I. (history says) possessed great riches and he was very generous and considered his subjects as his children. He even treated birds and beasts and fishes with consideration and he gave alms to the poor and needy. His wife, Queen Sangha, was also a very good and beautiful woman, and the people of Lanka would have been quite happy, if the Tamils had not come again in great numbers and begun to ravage the Northern part of the Island.

Even the King of Pandya came himself with a great army and when the Tamils, who dwelt in the Island, saw the Tamil King so stately and gorgeously attired, sitting on his magnificent elephant, going to war against the

Sinhalese King, they all gathered round him and his army became larger every day. It grew so large and strong that the Sinhalese army, under the King's brothers Mihindu and Kasyapa, could not stand against it.

Mihindu killed himself, when he saw that there was no possibility of victory and Kasyapa, after very bravely trying to overcome the Tamils, almost single-handed, and to make up thus for his brother's weakness, had to give up. He had to leave Anuradhapura to its fate!

And now the Pandians began to plunder and ruin everything.

They destroyed the King's palace and robbed it of its wealth. They pulled down the golden covering of the Thuparama. They destroyed the Brazen Palace. They stole the jewels from the Treasury. They mutilated the statues, in order to get the jewels with which they were adorned. They melted the golden images. They broke the pokunas (baths). They made some of the tanks useless and they left the city of Anuradhapura desolate! The poor beautiful queen of cities in Lanka lay in ruins!

History says they made Lanka of no value whatsoever.

When all this had been done, the King of Pandya sent messengers to King Sena I. that he was willing to make a peace-treaty with him.

Sena I. received his messengers very kindly. Trembling with fear he made peace with the

Pandyan King, so that he left Lanka with his army.

Now the enemies were gone, but oh ! for the desolation, which they left behind !

Poor Anuradhapura was in ruins and it was not possible ever to restore it to its former grandeur again.

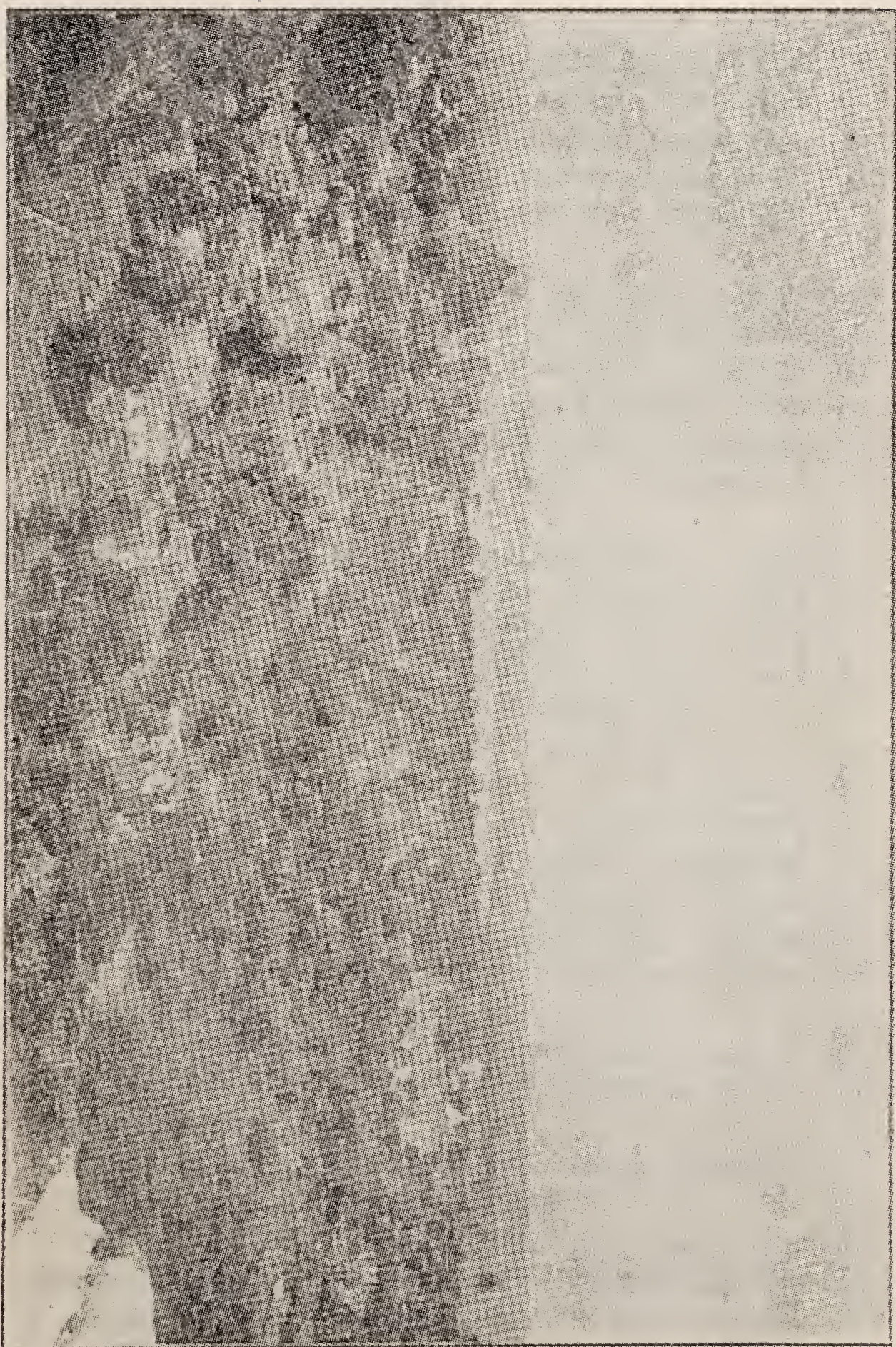
Besides, almost all the King's treasures were gone and all the rich Sinhalese were reduced to poverty.

King Sena I. tried very hard to do all he could to bring prosperity back to Lanka ; but he had neither the money nor the strength to do very much. He ended his reign in peace ; but his last years were sad ones ; he grieved for poor Anuradhapura which lay in ruins.

The destruction of Anuradhapura occurred about 850 A. D.

[“ Poor Anuradhapura,” cried the girls. “ How is it possible to destroy wilfully religious buildings ? ”

“ Well, my children, the sad fact remains, so clearly shown in History, that when an enemy comes to a country and when the enemy is successful, destruction follows. War is a great evil ! If the wonderful Dagobas in Anuradhapura had not been built so firmly, so that it was an impossibility to destroy them *entirely*, then not even the ruins, which we admire now, would have been left. The Sinhalese of old



Amrpalhapura, as it is now

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were remarkable architects and builders. The more the old structures, covered with the vegetation of more than a thousand years, are unearthed now, the more we must wonder how gigantic these monuments of the Buddhist faith were.

“Only think, children, it has been calculated, that so many millions of tons of bricks were used to build *one single Dagoba*, like the Abhayagiri or Jetawanarama-Dagoba, that 18,000 houses with a 20 feet frontage for each could be built with the same number of bricks !

“When all these gigantic Dagobas of Anuradhapura were covered with shining white chunam, how beautiful they must have looked and then all the golden pinnacles on them and the Brazen Palace with its shining roof !

“Sometimes I picture to myself how Anuradhapura must have looked in its glory, with its many palaces and gardens and its gorgeous elephant processions wending their way round the Ruanweli Dagoba ! With the Kings and Princes in their royal attire on these elephants and the hundreds of yellow robed monks !

“Then afterwards, I feel very sad, when I think of the destruction, of glorious Anuradhapura in ruins !”

All were silent and then the whole crowd of attentive children sighed deeply.

“But it is late, my dear children,” said the mother at last “and we must stop our talk for to-night, I am afraid, my words have made you quite sad.”]

STORY XVII.

KING SENA II.

After the death of King Sena I. his nephew with the same name took possession of the throne of Lanka.

He was a brave Prince, the son of that strong Prince Kasyapa, who tried so courageously to drive the Tamils away under King Sena I.

As King Sena II. had inherited the strength and bearing of his father, he did a great deal for Lanka and by his bravery and courage he won back for a time, the lost honour of the Sinhalese warriors.

I will tell you what he did.

One day he was holding a great religious festival, when he saw that a pedestal on which a golden statue had stood, in a large temple, was empty. He wondered what had become of it and he asked his Ministers about it. They answered him thus: "Does not Your Majesty know, that during the reign of King Sena I. your uncle, the King of Pandya came to Lanka and stole all the statues and the jewels and everything valuable, which he could carry away? This golden statue, which used to adorn this pedestal was one of those which were stolen."

King Sena II. was quite ashamed that he had forgotten for the time being, what had

happened some years ago. He almost felt as if that defeat had fallen upon himself as King, and he made up his mind at once, that he would raise an army and try to win back the stolen treasures and the war-honour for the Sinhalese.

It happened just at this time, that a Pandyan Prince had come to Ceylon, under the pretence of having been treated badly by his relative, the governing King of Pandya and he asked King Sena II. to help him against this King.

So King Sena II. took this opportunity to send this Pandyan Prince together with his bravest general over to India to regain the Sinhalese treasures and to put the Pandyan Prince on the throne.

The Sinhalese army showed a great deal of bravery.; besieged Madura in South India, killed the Pandyan King, put the young Prince of Pandya on the throne and now they searched for the Sinhalese treasures. The general himself found some of them in the King's Palace in Madura and he brought them back to Lanka together with a good many precious things from Pandya.

Now King Sena II. as well as his Queen Sangha, did a great deal to beautify Polonnaruwa, which was the capital at that time. They also restored as well as they could some of the buildings in Anuradhapura, for instance the Brazen-Palace. But to make Anuradha-

pura the capital again, seemed impossible, for it had lost its beauty for ever.

King Sena II. reigned for thirty-five years. (866—901). He was a great example to his subjects. During the time of peace he encouraged agriculture, in restoring and building tanks. He also fortified the country against invasions, by building strong ramparts so that for a while, after his death, the country was left free from outside troubles.

But I am sorry to say, the Sinhalese Chiefs rebelled at this period of time and the internal strife seemed almost worse than the invasions of the Tamils.

STORY XVIII.

KING MIHINDU V.

For about a hundred years disturbances within the country did more harm than foreign invasions. One of the Kings was strong enough to send an army to Pandya. But it had to return without success to Lanka, because the soldiers were attacked by a severe illness and their leader died.

The Tamils came again later, but they were driven back and King Mihindu V, was able for a while to remove his capital to Anuradhapura from Polonnaruwa.

He managed to live in Anuradhapura for twelve years, keeping a paid Tamil army to keep order. But his treasury was exhausted. The Sinhalese Kings had been robbed so many times of their wealth, that it is no wonder when we hear that King Mihindu V, could not pay his army and he had to leave Anuradhapura secretly. He did not go to Polonnaruwa either, because he thought he would not be safe there. So he fled to Ruhuna, which had been for a long time the strong-hold of the Sinhalese Kings and a good many prominent Sinhalese had retired to Ruhuna in times of trouble, as I have stated before.

Here in Ruhuna, King Mihindu V. lived for twenty four years, while the Tamils and the

dissatisfied Sinhalese chiefs were occupying Anuradhapura and Polonnaruwa. Thus it is quite clear that there was disorder and trouble everywhere.

The King of Chola got news of this state of affairs in Lanka, and took advantage of it. He knew that King Mihindu had only very little authority and so instead of taking possession of Anuradhapura and Polonnaruwa, he sent his army to Ruhuna. It was conquered quite easily and then King Mihindo and his Queen were taken prisoners to Chola, with the last of the King's treasures.

In Chola King Mihindu lived for twelve years, mourning for Lanka and then he died in captivity.

The King of Chola sent a Viceroy to Lanka during these twelve years, who ruled at Polonnaruwa during this Interregnum.

["What is an Interregnum?" asked little Leelawattie quite crossly. "I am afraid it is something very bad, because everything seems bad in Ceylon History lately."

"My little girl, you, too, seem to be dissatisfied with my stories now" said the mother. "I have to tell you, as I told Somawattie, that I do not *invent* stories, and as I tell stories from the 'History of Ceylon,' I must tell you what has happened even if

they are not as interesting as the stories from the old, old times, when I spoke to you about Flying-Machines and decorated ships, in which Princesses came to Ceylon and about Prince Duttu-Gemunu, etc."

"I wish those old, old times would come again," sighed Leelawattie.

"But now to answer your question about an Interregnum. The time between the reigns of two Kings is called an "Interregnum." There was an Interregnum in olden times also, when the first King of Lanka, Vijaya, had died and his nephew the second King Panduwasadeva had not arrived in time. Do you remember it was that King who married the beautiful Princess Badha-Kachchayana, who came to Lanka in the decorated ship?"

"Oh yes, I remember now, but *that* Interregnum was not such a bad one as the one you are telling us about now," said Leelawattie. "Then Upatissa, the good Minister, of the late King Vijaya, took good care of the country till the new King arrived. But *now* the Tamil Viceroy is reigning and there is great trouble in Ceylon. Oh, I hope some more good, strong Kings are coming again like King Tissa and King Duttu-Gemunu and some more pretty stories also!"

The little girl sighed as deeply as if the sorrows of all Lanka were resting on her shoulders, and she stole away to her studies very sadly.]

STORY XIX.

KING VIJAYA BAHU.

The little son of King Mihindū V. had been hidden by some of the faithful Sinhalese Chiefs, when his parents were carried away as prisoners to India, and he was carefully brought up in Ruhuna. He was a promising boy and probably would have made a good King, but unfortunately he died young and the government of Ruhuna fell into unscrupulous hands.

After a number of years a young Prince, a descendant of King Manavamma who was both proud and brave, made a great effort to drive the Tamils away and establish order. He was only seventeen years old, when he drove the Tamils out of Ruhuna.

He ascended the throne as Vijaya Bahu I, (1065—1120) and in his reign of forty-five years, he proved to be one of the greatest rulers Lanka had had for a long time.

At first the Cholians still held the “King’s Country.” *

But the clever King Vijaya Bahu I tried to sow dissension among the Tamils in which he succeeded after a while ; so that they began to quarrel with each other and the dissatisfied Tamils joined the King. This was just what he wanted.

* The Northern part of the Island was called thus. North and West of the Mahaweli Ganga, in which part both Anurādhapura and Polonnaruwa were situated.

King Vijaya Bahu I, however, was in great want of money, as the country had become poor from all the wars and invasions. His treasury was very empty and he could not pay his soldiers well. He thought, if he only could make some gifts to them, they would be more willing to fight for him.

So he sent an embassy to the King of Aramanna (Burma) and asked him for financial help. As this King was also a Buddhist, he sent valuable gifts of cloth and sandal-wood and other things to King Vijaya Bahu, which he sold. So with the proceeds he could pay his army and they were willing to fight.

He succeeded now in clearing part of the King's-Country from the Tamils. But when the King of Chola heard of this success, he sent a very large army over to Lanka and this army defeated King Vijaya Bahu's troops, so that his crown seemed in danger.

He had to retire to Ruhuna and the Tamil army followed him. But in Ruhuna the King's army showed its bravery. The Tamil army was destroyed and all their chariots, and their treasures were captured. Now Vijaya Bahu entered Polonnaruwa. But he could not hold it for a long time. He had to fight again and again, till at last the Tamil fortresses were taken and he was in permanent possession of Polonnaruwa and his authority was proclaimed by beat of drum.

When the King of Chola heard of this great success, he gave up fighting and left Lanka

He had to acknowledge the courage of the Sinhalese and he said "Now are the Sinhalese powerful."

Thus in the fifteenth year of his reign, King Vijaya Bahu could go to Anuradhapura and be crowned there, as was the custom of Kings. He remained for three months in Anuradhapura, after the coronation festivals were over, and then he returned to Polonnaruwa, which he made his capital.

He dealt out justice and tried to improve the state of affairs in Lanka. But he could not rest safely on his throne, till he put down several rebellions among his own subjects.

After peace was restored in the country, he adopted good measures to secure it against further invasions. He built a strong wall round Polonnaruwa and he protected it with towers and a deep moat. He also tried to bring the land back to its former fertility by protecting and encouraging agriculture.

Tanks were restored and new ones were constructed and after a while the deep veil of sorrow which had lain heavily on Lanka, began to lift.

Paddy-fields shone out again in their rich green and Lanka began to smile again !

Vijaya Bahu did not neglect the religion of the country either. He found that there were very few Buddhist Priests left, and he sent a second embassy to Aramanna, this time with the request to send some pious monks to Lanka, who would revive Buddhism, which had suffered a great deal during all the wars.

These monks arrived and now great activity commenced. Many young Sinhalese became monks and Vijaya Bahu provided for them liberally. He also built many Viharas and schools for them. He himself was a devoted and learned Buddhist, and he made some translations from the Pali text into Sinhalese.

Vijaya Bahu was also a great poet. He was so skilled in making songs, that he was considered to be the "Chief of the Bards" among the Sinhalese and he gave very valuable gifts in money and jewelry to those who were able to compose good poetry.

So this period in History shows great advance in literature.

Vijaya Bahu is praised on account of his compassion for cripples and blind people. It is said that he provided them with bullocks and small carts and he recommended his subjects to have mercy on the helpless, as he himself did. Even the hungry animals were not forgotten, and when they came to the court-yard of the palace, which occurred very often, they were fed. The King also encouraged pilgrimages to Adam's Peak and he made it easier for the people to undertake these tedious journeys by putting up rest houses for them on the way-side. Then he dedicated a whole village, which possessed a great many rice fields, for the use of these pilgrims. The people of this village had to provide the pilgrims with cooked rice, while they were resting in the King's Rest-Houses.

Thus did King Vijaya Bahu live for the benefit of his people. His reign was a long one, (1065—1120) he was on the throne for fifty-five years and it is wonderful how much he accomplished during his reign; for you know in what a dreadful condition the Island was, before he became King.

Vijaya Bahu was twice married. His first wife was a daughter of King Jayat-Pali, whose Queen and daughter, had been living as captives in the kingdom of Chola. But both of them escaped and returned to Lanka. They came to Polonnaruwa and asked King Vijaya Bahu for protection. The daughter of the Queen was very beautiful and King Vijaya Bahu liked her so much that he made her his Queen. Her name was Leilawattie. Queen Leilawattie's daughter was called Yasodhara, and Yasodhara's daughters were Leilawattie and Sugala.

(I mention these names, because Sugala became very prominent in History later on).

King Vijaya Bahu's second wife was a Princess of Kalinga (India) named Tilakasundari. She was a very beautiful woman, and she became the mother of five charming daughters; among whom Ratnavali was the most beautiful.

One day, when King Vijaya Bahu was in the midst of his household, and when he looked with delight on his sweet daughters, the spirit of prophecy came over him.



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“ King Vijaya-Bahu, kissing his daughter Ratnavali's head gently said . . . ”

(To face page 177.)

He seemed to see his daughter Ratnavali as the mother of a great hero. He called her aside and said to her, kissing her head gently: "You, my daughter, will become the mother of a son, who will be great and prosperous. His glory and wisdom and valour will surpass all Kings who have been before him, or shall come after him. He will deliver Lanka from the fear of her enemies and bring her under one crown. He will be the Protector of her religion and adorn his throne with many virtues."

So the King looked round among the young Princes for a suitable husband for this beloved daughter, and his eye fell on the son of his younger sister Mitta. Mitta had married a Prince of Pandya, and she had three sons.

He gave three of his daughters as wives to these three sons of his sister. He chose Manabharana for Ratnavali, as he thought him the most promising of the Princes.

We will see later, whether the prophecy of Ratnavali's son will be fulfilled.

"I think we shall soon hear of a great King now, a *real great* King" said Somawattie smilingly; "it is high time for it. Vijaya-Bahu was a *good* King, but he was not as *great* as Duttu-Gemunu and I am longing to learn about another hero like him. Will he come soon, mother dear?"

“Patience, my little one, everything comes to the one who waits.”

“Please dear mother, tell us something about Adam’s Peak, which you mentioned a little while ago,” said Yasodhara. “Is there really a foot print of the Lord Buddha on its top?”

“My dear child, you are asking me a very difficult question” answered the mother, “I can only answer it, by telling you some of the stories which are told about it.

“But I must ask you to wait till to-morrow, for I have to tell you a great deal about Adam’s Peak. I know my little girls specially will enjoy a dear little story, which I will relate to them and which tells why flowers are taken to Adam’s Peak.”]

ADAM'S PEAK.

["To-day, my children," said the mother the following day, "we will interrupt our historical stories and take a trip to Adam's Peak together? Will not that be nice?"

"Oh, very nice, dear mother," cried the girls. "We have all been so very anxious to hear something about dear old Adam's Peak." "Well, then *listen*, my children."]

Adam's Peak is the most remarkable of the mountains of Ceylon, because the followers of several religions pronounce it to be a holy mountain.

The Hindus say, the immense foot-print on the top of the mountain is the foot-print of the God Siva.

The Muhammadans claim the foot-print as the one made by Adam, after he had been sent out of Paradise and was doing penance on the top of Adam's-Peak.

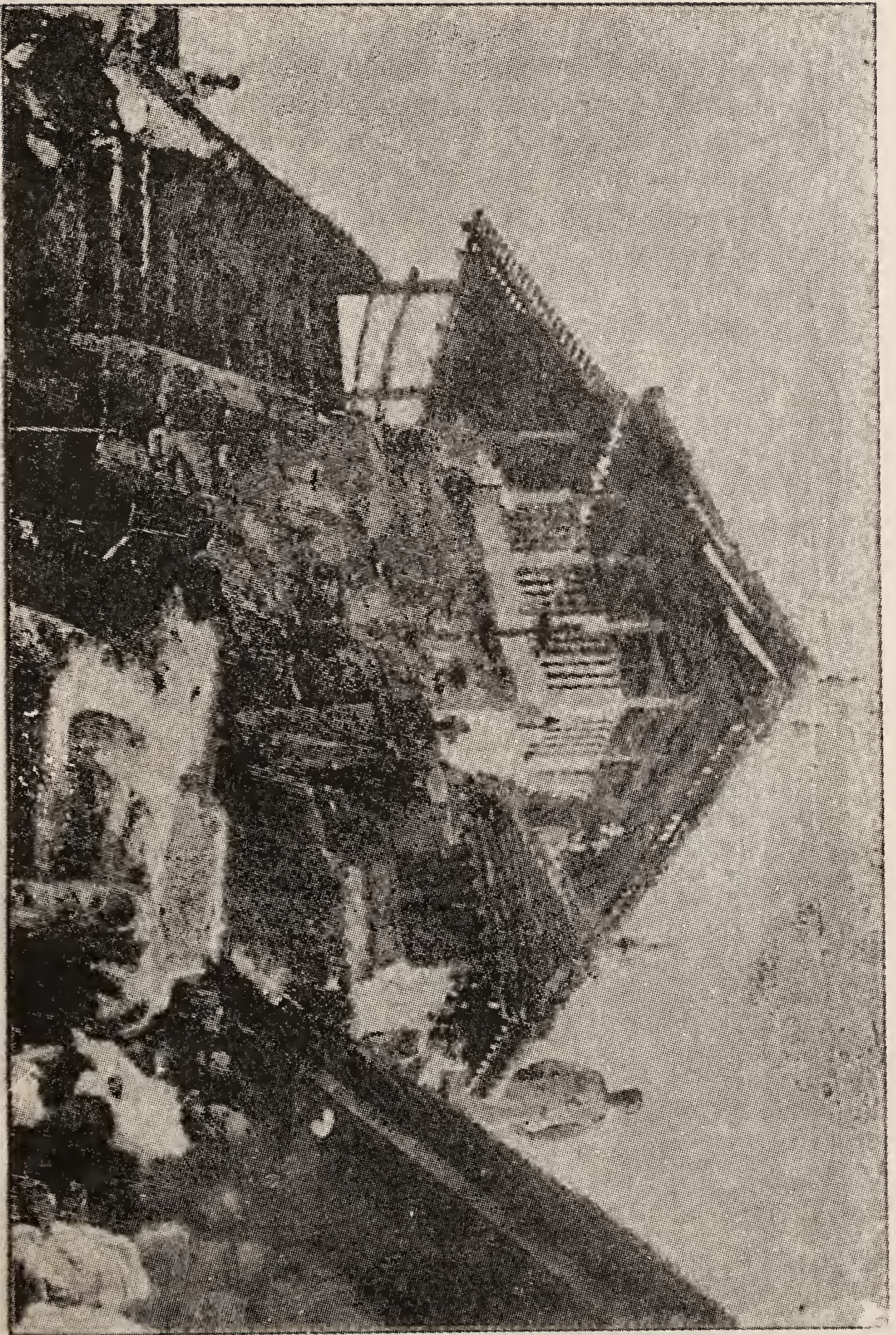
The Buddhists give to the *temple* on the top of Adam's Peak the name "*shrine of Sripada*" (Shrine of the holy Foot-print) and they say that the Lord Buddha, on His third visit to Lanka, meditated on the Mountain Samanthalakuta (Adam's Peak) and that He left his foot-print there.

Another version is that long before the Lord Buddha came to Lanka this mountain

was a holy mountain. They say a great Deva, named Saman-Deviyo had it under his charge. The Lord Buddha paid a visit to this great *Genius* of the Mountain and on leaving him, pressed his foot into the hard rock as a permanent sign of his visit there. The Deva, in order to protect this holy foot-impression against the touch of any being, brought a huge piece of rock and covered it with it. Then a hollow was made on this piece of rock, now forming the summit of Adam's Peak, and it resembles a giant's foot-print.

Whatever the truth of this may be, the name 'Saman-Deviyo' is not forgotten. The Buddhist pilgrims, on their way to Adam's-Peak, call out this name constantly and ask the great Deva to protect them. And it is also true, that on the top of the Mountain, there is an *indentation*, which looks like an immense foot-print and Buddhists, Hindus and Muhammaddans make pilgrimages to the top of the mountain, where a little Buddhist Shrine is erected over this immense foot-impression. A Buddhist Priest is in attendance there and it is a most remarkable sight to see how the pilgrims of the different Religions unite there in unity and love, all worshipping together.

It is a very hard and tedious task to get up to Adam's Peak, but all the pilgrims undertake it with a happy heart. During the hard work of climbing up, not an unkind word is uttered. The strong climber helps the weaker one, and one even sees old and sick people being carried up lovingly by their relatives or friends.



The Temple on the top of Adam's-Peak.

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Generally the climb is commenced at midnight and each pilgrim carries a lamp or candle or torch and that makes a wonderful sight as you may imagine. Then, when the top is reached, at about sun-rise, there is not only the foot-print and the sunrise to be looked at, but there is something very remarkable to be seen besides. It is the strange "shadow of Adam's Peak."

Just before sunrise, an immense white cloud-like shadow appears on the western side of the mountain, just in the shape of the Peak itself. It gets larger and larger and it melts or disappears into the mountain just when the sun rises. This is the famous "shadow of Adam's Peak."

When the pilgrims have seen all this and have laid down their flower offerings on the immense foot-print, they climb down the mountain again very happy and contented and believe that they have gained great merit in having undertaken the wearisome pilgrimage to the top of Adam's Peak.

There is a very pretty legend told, why flowers are brought to the top of Adam's Peak and I will tell it to you.

There lived once in Ceylon a King named Bhatiya I,* who loved flowers very much. He had the most exquisite flower-gardens

* He is the same King who once covered the whole of the Ruanweli-Dagoba with flowers and who did not rest till he was allowed to enter this Dagoba.

round his palace in Anuradhapura and as he was a very religious King, he used to take the best flowers every morning to one of the Temples.

One morning the gardeners of the King came to him in despair, they could not find a single flower in the gardens, all those which had been selected for the King and his household as suitable for the Temple, had disappeared. No one could find out who had taken them away and there were no traces of feet anywhere to be seen.

Now, watchers were put at all the gates of the flower gardens to prevent such a thing from happening again. But strange to say, the next morning all the flowers were gone again and nobody had seen a human being enter the flower-gardens.

Then the King had proclaimed by beat of drum, that the person who could trace the flowers from his garden, would receive a very handsome reward.

Many persons volunteered their services and searched everywhere for the thief or thieves; but nobody could find out anything; it was all in vain. And the flowers disappeared as before.

At last a blind cripple offered his services to the King. The King was wondering what a cripple, who was blind also, could do, when so many healthy persons, who could see had failed. But he thought he would

give him a chance, and he ordered that all the wishes of this poor cripple should be fulfilled.

The cripple asked to have a little hut erected in the middle of the King's garden, where he could stay all alone during the nights. He promised that he would certainly catch the persons who stole the flowers, within a certain number of days.

This blind cripple was a pious man, and while he stayed in the lonely hut in the garden, he prayed and chanted mantrams through the whole night, invoking the Devas of the flowers to show him who took the King's flowers away.

Still the flowers disappeared, and no trace of footsteps was seen. But one night, when he was praying very earnestly in his hut, the cripple heard a slight movement among the flowers in the garden, and if he had been able to see, he might have discovered some lovely beings flitting about the flowers, gathering the most fragrant ones into small baskets and then flying away towards the morning sun.

He was wondering whether he was now on the track of the flower thieves and so the next night he chanted and prayed louder than ever.

The beings, who were coming every night to gather flowers from the King's garden were the Flower-Devis in charge of Adam's-peak.

They had found out the beautiful sweet-smelling flowers in the King's garden, and they were delighted to take them to their small flower-shrine on the mountain. When they came the following night to the garden, and heard the chanting of the blind cripple, they entered his hut, listening to his prayers.

They became very sorry for the poor man and began whispering some consoling words to him.

"Who are you, speaking to me in sweet tones?" asked the blind man. "I wish I could see you, for your voices are sweet like the voices of the Devis."

"Thou shalt see us, if thou wilt not betray us," said one of the Devis and she touched his eyes with one of the flowers, which she took out of her basket. And lo! the cripple saw himself surrounded by the loveliest creatures he had ever heard of.

"Now, we will make thee healthy and strong also, for thou art good and thy bad Karma has passed," said the foremost of the Devis. She murmured some sweet sounding mantrams over him and the maimed limbs of the poor man straightened and he stood up in youth and strength again. When he was throwing himself down in gratitude before the Devi who had healed him, she and her sisters disappeared and he was alone in his hut.

But he got up from his knees and he looked at himself, for he could see now, and he found that it was not a dream, it

was reality. He could see and he could walk without his crutches! Oh, what happiness that was!

He first intended in his joy to rush out and tell his story to the King. But then he said to himself. "But I do not know yet where the flowers go, and so I must wait another night here to find out where the flowers are taken."

The following night, the now strong and able to see man, prayed and chanted eagerly, invoking the Devis to appear once more. When they came again to gather the flowers under the rays of the Full-Moon, he stepped out among them and catching hold of the dress of one of the Devis, he implored her to tell him where the flowers were carried. The others, frightened by this act of the man, fled, because it was against the rules of their race, to be touched by a mortal being. So the Devi, who was caught begged him to let her go.

The at-one-time cripple pleaded: "Show me where the flowers are taken and with a thousand blessings I will let you go to your flower home!" "Listen," she whispered, "Tomorrow night, I will strew a path of Araliya flowers all the way to the place where we take the flowers. Follow that flowery path and you will know." The man bowed down before the Devi and let go her garment and she flew away quickly following her sisters.

As promised the Devi made the following

night a road of Araliya flowers and the poor man followed this track. And it stretched forth very far and at last it ended on the top of Adam's Peak, where he found on a shrine all the King's flowers. But no Devi was to be seen.

The next morning this man who was blind before and who carried his crutches in his hand, appeared before the King and told the whole story. First the King would not believe him, but when he sent one of his Ministers with him to Adam's Peak, and when the Minister saw with his own eyes the King's flowers there, he could not help believing the story. The man received the promised reward and from this time nobody wondered why the King's flowers disappeared and nobody disturbed the Devis, when they came in the night to the King's garden.

And from this day the King sent flowers to Adam's-Peak on Full Moon Days, and the people began to make pilgrimages to Adam's Peak.

This is the legend about the disappearance of the King's flowers.

["That was *really* a pretty story " cried all the girls at the same time. "Thank you very much dear Mother."]

STORY XXI.

KING PARAKRAMA-BAHU THE GREAT.

CHAPTER I.

THE DREAMS.

[Now we will go on with our Historical stories, after our visit to Adam's Peak which we all liked and I know you all will be glad to hear that the great king, whom our little Somawattie is expecting so eagerly, is really coming.]

Although King Vijaya Bahu I. (our last king) had kept his country in good order, it did not remain so after his death. Had his son, Vikrama-Bahu, followed in the foot-steps of his father, he might have been able to govern the Island better. But he was a wicked king, who took away the lands of the good chiefs, who wanted to advise him to be a just king, and gave them to bad people, who flattered him. He even stole some of the treasures from the temples, so that the Monks collected what they could, in books and treasure, and fled to Ruhuna, where the three sons of Mitta, the sister of the late king, Vijaya-Bahu, were ruling.

The eldest of the three, Prince Manabharana, the husband of king Vijaya-Bahu's favourite daughter Ratnavali, was the King of Ruhuna

and his two younger brothers were serving under him.

But also here, in Ruhuna, there were disturbances. The unprincipled chiefs, who had been set to watch the boundaries of the Provinces, began to quarrel with each other and it is said in history, 'They, who loved ruin and destruction were wandering over the land.'

Prince Manabharana had two daughters, but no son and Ratnavali, his Queen, thinking of the prophecy of her father, Vijaya-Bahu I, was very sad, fearing that it would not be fulfilled. Also Manabharana himself thought, that he might have been living too worldly a life, therefore as punishment, no son would be born to him. So he retired from Government for a while and lived very quietly for several months, doing as many good deeds as he could.

Once he was spending a night in a temple and there he had a remarkable dream. A Devi of great beauty appeared to him, dressed in shining garments and adorned with sweet smelling flowers, and she spoke to him thus: 'Hail, Lord of the Land, who art favoured by fortune. Rejoice and be glad, for ere long there shall be born to thee a noble son endowed with marks of greatness, able to accomplish all his desires; refined in mind, resplendent with power, fame and glory; a mine of virtue, who shall raise up his people and the Religion of the Land!' Then the Devi disappeared.

With a happy heart the King hurried to his wife and told her and his ministers his dream.

All rejoiced and they gave a great deal to the poor, in their happiness of heart.

After a short time Prince Manabharana had another dream, in which he saw a tame, young, white elephant, which he petted and took into the room of his sleeping Queen.

Then Manabharana awoke and because this dream seemed to be a very good one, he hastened to his Queen and told it to her at once.

Ratnavali said: "I, too, saw in my dream a tame white elephant, coming towards me in a very friendly way. This dream, which came to both of us at the same time, must be the sign, that our wish will be fulfilled and that a great son will be born to us."

Then they consulted the Wise Ones of the country and all the Sages agreed that this dream meant that a son would be born to Manabharana, who would become a great king, *shining* among the people, as a white elephant *shines* among the darker ones.

The King and Queen were very happy, and Manabharana in his joy, gave a great festival. Then he began to restore tanks and rebuild Viharas and do good to the poor, in order to become worthy of the great son who was to be born to him.

And history says, "A son was born to King Manabharana and Queen Ratnavali at a lucky hour, when the stars were very favourable. At once the whole country was filled with gladness and sweet cooling winds blew every-

where. The courts of the Palace resounded with the trumpeting of the elephants and the neighing of the horses."

Such was the announcement of the birth of the little Prince!

King Manabharana was so happy that his little son was born with so many lucky signs, that in his joy he freed all the prisoners who had been shut up for a long time, and he fed the poor and the Monks in a generous way.

The Wise Ones of the Land, examining the child said: "This prince will have the power to subdue not only the Island of Lanka, but even the whole of India. He will have a long life. But there is evil written in the stars for his father, who will soon die."

The young prince received the name Parakrama-Bahu, (which means, he who humbles his enemies with a strong arm).

Prince Manabharana sent word to the King of Polonnaruwa, Vikrama-Bahu, (the brother of Queen Ratnavali) of the birth of his son and Vikrama-Bahu offered to adopt the little Prince, with the object of making him his successor, saying that his own sons were not fit to become good rulers. But Manabharana would not consent to it. He wanted to see his son grow up under his own care, so he watched lovingly over him as long as he lived.

Unfortunately Manabharana died, as had been prophesied, before his son grew up. Now Manabharana's younger brother, Kirti-Sri

Megha, became the Ruler of Ruhuna, and the youngest of the brothers of Manabharana, Sri-Vallabha, took care of Queen Ratnavali, her two daughters and her promising son Parakrama-Bahu, whom he brought up carefully and whom he had educated thoroughly in all sciences and in the art of war.

When King Vikrama-Bahu died in 1142 A.D. his son Gaja-Bahu II. became King of the King's Country, with Polonnaruwa as his capital, although Kirti-Sri Megha and Sri Vallabha would have liked very much to take possession of the King's Country. They were subdued by Gaja-Bahu II. when they attempted to fight with him about the crown, and they had to be content with Ruhuna.

[“ Those dreams of Manabharana and Queen Ratnavali remind me of the dreams of Vihara-Maha-Devi, before her son Gemunu was born,” said Yasodhara, “ Only they are not quite so striking and unusual. I wonder whether this little Prince will become as great a hero as Gemunu was ! ”

“ Well dear Yasodhara ! you will very soon be able to judge whether Parakrama-Bahu will do justice to his name. He also had a good mother, for Ratnavali was kind and well educated. But she was not as remarkable a woman as Vihara-Maha-Devi was.

“History repeats itself, and the conditions in Lanka about this time, were about the same as they were at Gemunu’s time. I even think they were worse, for the Island had been invaded so many times since King Elala’s time, that the people were not so brave and courageous and not so able to resist, as when Gemunu prepared his army of ‘strong warriors’ to fight against the invaders.

“And my little Somie, there were no strong warriors this time and no Giant Neela either, who could do wonders with his iron staff.

“So, generally speaking, I think the task before Parakrama-Bahu, was even harder than Gemunu’s had been, and we will see soon, whether we can compare these two Kings with one another.”]

CHAPTER II.

PRINCE PARAKRAMA-BAHU.

Prince Parakrama-Bahu grew up to be a clever, handsome youth. He did not care for the pleasures which were offered to him, but he was often to be seen with an ola-book in his hand, sitting on a stone-bench under the shelter of a big tree in the palace-garden, or with bow and arrow practising shooting.

Soon the limited space of Sri Vallabha's palace grew too small for the ambitious young Prince and he made up his mind to go to the place where he was born and where his father Manabharana had been Ruler.

At that time his other uncle Kirti-Sri-Megha was reigning in Ruhuna, and he went to him on a visit. When Prince Parakrama-Bahu arrived in Sankhatthali * his own birthplace, he was received with open arms by his uncle. He lived there with him for a while and was treated like a son by him. But he grew discontented here also, thinking that even if he were to become the successor of his uncle it would only be the very small Kingdom of Ruhuna which would be his. His ambition however went further than that, for he wanted to become sole ruler of the whole of Lanka.

* The present Alupota, not far from Badulla.

The young Prince had read about the heroic deeds of Rama in the Ramayana and he had studied the life history of the Kings Tissa and Gemunu and he wanted to become a second Gemunu. He was also familiar with the Ummagga-Jataka and other Jataka stories and he could not rest till he had found out what was going on in the King's Country where his cousin Gaja-Bahu II. was ruling. He thought in the bigger Kingdom he could make his plans for the future heroic deeds, which he was determined to do.

So Prince Parakrama-Bahu left the Palace of his uncle Kirti-Sri-Megha secretly and gathered some brave soldiers round him. Kirti-Sri-Megha, fearing war, tried to bring his nephew back but in vain. The young Prince conquered the army his uncle sent after him and showed such marvellous courage and strength, that all became afraid of him and the army of Kirti-Sri-Megha returned to Ruhuna.

Then Parakrama-Bahu crossed the boundary to King Gaja-Bahu's country and when Gaja-Bahu heard this, he sent messengers to Prince Parakrama-Bahu with presents of jewellery and garments, in order to show his friendly feelings. Parakrama-Bahu accepted the gifts and the two royal cousins entered Polonnaruwa, the capital of the King's Country, together in friendship, seated on two magnificent elephants. They lived together in love and harmony for some time.

But Parakrama-Bahu soon saw that Gaja-Bahu was not a very strong King, and his ambition did not let him rest. Parakrama-Bahu pretended to be very fond of pleasure, mixed up with the people, in order to find out their thoughts and made himself very popular. He sent out spies in the disguise of singers, dancers, merchants and physicians, for the purpose of finding out who were the faithful subjects of Gaja-Bahu and whom he could win over to himself. In this way he became acquainted with the state of affairs in the whole of Gaja-Bahu's realm.

Then, to gain the King's full confidence, he sent for his beautiful younger sister, Bhaddavati and gave her in marriage to Gaja-Bahu.

Parakrama-Bahu gained the love of the people more and more, by showing them his strength and courage. Once he so scared a mad buffalo, which had killed a good many people, by his powerful voice that it fled in terror from the place. The people were full of praise of the powerful young Prince, but King Gaja-Bahu became very jealous.

When Parakrama-Bahu found this out, he resolved to leave Polonnaruwa, so he took leave in a friendly way from King Gaja-Bahu, telling him, that he intended to pay a visit to his uncle Kirti-Sri-Megha, but in his heart he made up his mind to come back and fight with Gaja-Bahu.

In Ruhuna, where Parakrama-Bahu reappeared now, he was received with great joy

by his mother and by his uncle Kirti-Sri-Megha, who met him like a father, forgetting that sometime ago his nephew had fought against him.

Parakrama-Bahu remained in Ruhuna for the time being, as he saw that his uncle was near his death, an event which really occurred soon. His uncle had made him his heir and successor, and now Parakrama-Bahu was ruler of Ruhuna, as his father had been and as Duttu-Gemunu had been long ago.

He set to work now to improve Ruhuna. He restored the ruined tanks and cultivated paddy, so that the land of Ruhuna became a land of plenty, a real store-house of paddy. It was so full of granaries, that no famine could come to it. He did not allow even a small piece of land to be left bare. He laid out gardens and planted flower and fruit trees where paddy would not grow, till the whole of Ruhuna looked like one beautiful garden. Then, when Ruhuna smiled with prosperity from every corner, he began to collect soldiers. He drilled them and practised them in sham fights. He had also some of the noblemen's sons educated in his own palace, in order to get them accustomed to the service of kings.

The only want now was money, and he got that by exporting gems and the extra quantity of paddy, which grew so plentifully in Ruhuna after the new irrigation works had been completed.

Now he was ready to fight with King Gaja Bahu or anybody else, who would hinder him from becoming the sole Ruler in Lanka.

“How alike the early parts of the lives of Gemunu and Parakrama-Bahu are,” said Yaseeli. “But I am afraid Parakrama-Bahu is not quite as conscientious as Gemunu was. Gemunu asked his father three times for permission to fight with King Elala, who was an enemy to the country; but Parakrama-Bahu is preparing to fight with his own cousin, who was not his enemy.”

“My child, your statement is quite right,” answered the mother, “I am of the same opinion. But ambitious men, like Parakrama Bahu, do not think that a weak relative should stand in the way when the welfare of the whole country is concerned.

“You will see later on that Parakrama-Bahu was at last persuaded not to dethrone Gaja-Bahu, but wait till he had died, before he took possession of the throne of the King’s Country.”

“Anyhow, Parakrama-Bahu became the hero-king of Ceylon” shouted little Somawattie, “and I am very glad that he is trying to unite the whole Island and govern it like great King Gemunu had done.”

CHAPTER III.

WAR BETWEEN GAJA BAHU AND
PARAKRAMA-BAHU

After all these preparations were completed Parakrama-Bahu began his war against King Gaja-Bahu. Many battles were fought, but generally Parakrama-Bahu's soldiers were victorious. Then his generals besieged Polonnaruwa and made King Gaja-Bahu a prisoner in his own palace. They even ill-treated him and wanted to murder him. This was against the orders of Parakrama-Bahu who was not in Polonnaruwa at the time. Parakrama-Bahu's soldiers behaved so badly that King Gaja-Bahu's ministers sent an appeal for help to Prince Manabharana, the son of Sri Valabha, the cousin of both Parakrama and Gaja-Bahu.

Prince Manabharana came, and took possession of Polonnaruwa under the pretence of saving King Gaja-Bahu. But after a few days he showed his real intention and that was to poison King Gaja-Bahu and make himself King.

Poor Gaja-Bahu seemed now attacked on all sides, and he thought he would appeal to the generosity of Parakrama-Bahu, who at once came to Polonnaruwa, freed King Gaja-Bahu and tried to restore order.

Then Prince Manabharana secretly left Polonnaruwa, taking with him his mother Sagala, and some of the King's treasures, among them were the Tooth Relic and alms-bowl of the Lord Buddha which were considered as the most precious relics in the whole Island.

If King Gaja Bahu-had now further trusted to the generosity of Parakrama-Bahu, matters would have been better, but he was afraid that the conqueror would harm him and he fled. He was soon re-captured, and now it would have gone badly with him, had not Gaja-Bahu appealed to the priests. They took up his cause and persuaded Parakrama-Bahu to give the kingdom back to him as he was old and sick and would not live very much longer. They said that Parakrama-Bahu's glory would be greater if he waited till Gaja-Bahu was dead.

Parakrama-Bahu took the advice of the Monks, gave back Gaja-Bahu his kingdom and returned to his own country Ruhuna. When Prince Manabharana heard of this he tried to make an alliance with King Gaja-Bahu against Parakrama-Bahu. But Gaja-Bahu remained faithful, he went to a temple and had engraved on a stone-tablet, that he bequeathed his kingdom willingly to his cousin Parakrama-Bahu. Soon after this King Gaja-Bahu died, after having been King of Lanka for twenty-two years, and Parakrama-Bahu followed him to the throne in the year 1164 A. D.

CHAPTER IV

TWICE CROWNED.

Parakrama-Bahu was now King of the King's Country, as well as of Ruhuna and he

was persuaded to have himself crowned King of Lanka on a lucky day. The splendour of his coronation attracted all the people and they were beginning to hope for better times.

But Prince Manabharana (his cousin) would not allow the new King to sit quietly on his throne. He wanted to occupy the throne himself and he began to attack King Parakrama-Bahu fiercely. Many battles had to be fought before Manabharana was subdued and he had to flee during the night in pouring rain. Manabharana did not survive this defeat for long. He died repenting bitterly of having gone against the mighty Parakrama-Bahu and advising his son to do the bidding of the great king. His son followed the advice of his dying father, but Manabharana's mother, Sugala, held out against him, and I shall have more to tell you about her.

Now King Parakrama-Bahu was crowned for the second time and this second coronation was even a more splendid affair than the first. Decked with all his Kingly garments, he mounted a golden stage, which was supported by two elephants, decorated with gold cloth. His crown was shining with gems and pearls. Thus the stately, handsome young King showed himself to his enthusiastic subjects. Surrounded by his soldiers and hailed by thousands of people, he was carried in triumph through the streets of Polonnaruwa. And once more Lanka had a great King, who had the religious devotion of King Devanampiya-Tissa and the

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"Parakrama-Bahu mounted a Golden Stage, which was supported by two Elephants."

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strength of arms of King Duttu-Gemunu of old, combined in him.

The second 'Golden Age of Lanka' was dawning.

The second coronation of Parakrama-Bahu took place in the 2nd year after the first coronation.

["Oh, I wish I could have seen this grand coronation procession", said Amarawattie, "I think it must have looked something like our Kandy Perahera, only that the King was sitting under the houdah on the elephant's back instead of relics being carried round." "I think," cried Leelawattie, "Parakrama-Bahu's coronation-procession must have been very much grander, because the Sinhalese, at that time, were richer than they are now. I know that is so, because our mother said that the two elephants, which carried the King were covered with gold cloth, and the elephants in the Kandy Perahera have only red-cloth with gold embroidery. And" (she added hesitatingly), "I have even seen some holes in their cloths and that shows that the people now are not as rich as they used to be."

All the girls laughed and the mother said. "Perhaps you are right, my little girl, formerly there might have been more wealth in Lanka than there is now. The Kings of Lanka were said to have had most precious

jewels and very beautiful garments woven with gold thread. When the Kings were carried round in procession, then their elephants were decorated almost as gorgeously as their masters.”]

CHAPTER V.

PARAKRAMA-BAHU THE GREAT.

Now began one of the most wonderful reigns that has ever been recorded in History.

Everything which was undertaken by the powerful and ambitious young King Parakrama-Bahu was successful.

He began his reign by restoring order in Lanka, which had suffered a great deal through the years of civil war, and it took him a long time before he succeeded in what he had resolved to do. But he did not rest till the work was done.

He could not do much for Ruhuna, his birth place, at first; for Sugala, the mother of Prince Manabharana, had after his death taken possession of Ruhuna, and she, supported by some powerful chiefs, rebelled against Parakrama-Bahu and gave him a great deal of trouble. She was a proud woman, and would not submit to his authority and her Ruhuna Chiefs followed her example.

Parakrama-Bahu sent two of his bravest generals against Sugala, instructing them specially to take from Sugala the two relics, the Tooth-Relic and the Alms-bowl-Relic, which she had taken with her, when she left Polonnaruwa with her son Manabharana, after Parakrama-Bahu had freed the late King Gaja-Bahu (as you will remember I hope, my children). A good many battles were fought between the two parties, while Parakrama-Bahu was very busy in Polonnaruwa, restoring order and trying to bring prosperity back to Lanka.

At last, the two Relics were captured and brought back to Polonnaruwa, where Parakrama-Bahu received them with great joy and where great festivals were celebrated in their honour.

It is said that as soon as King Parakrama-Bahu heard that the procession with these Relics was approaching Polonnaruwa, he anointed himself with precious oil, put on his gorgeous kingly garments and surrounded by princes and noblemen, went several miles out of the city to receive the Relics. When he came in sight of the procession, he got down from his state-elephant, prostrated himself and made offerings of gems, incense and flowers to the Relics and lifting them on his head, he bore them himself to the city, where he placed them in the Relic-house, which had been built for them in the middle of the city.

Then he had this Relic-house beautifully decorated, had the road from his Palace to

it, made as smooth as the palm of the hand and had pandals* erected along this road which were ornamented with paintings, and columns covered with cloth of different colours. Rows of bright painted parasols with clusters of flowers hanging in baskets under them, were hung between the columns. And so the whole road looked like an immense Palace in festive attire.

In the meanwhile the King had a gem of great size hollowed out, filled it with powdered perfumes and he placed the Tooth-relic in it and put it in a casket of gold,

The Bowl-relic he had placed on a throne, covered with splendid carpets, on which were spread sweet-smelling flowers. And this throne stood in a pavilion, which was covered with jewels.

After all these preparations were over, King Parakrama-Bahu held a great festival in honour of these Relics.

He placed people of high rank, decked with costly garments, holding up Royal parasols, round the Relic-houses. Musical instruments were played, incense was burned, flowers were heaped up inside and outside the Relic-houses and then he had the Relic-houses lit up with thousands of little oil-lamps, so that the Relic-houses looked like one great sea of light.

Then, King Parakrama-Bahu appeared on his state-elephant, both of them profusely

* Pandals are arches, made of bamboos, with festoons of young coconut leaves, and fruits etc.

decorated, and among the trumpeting of the elephants, the beating of the tom-toms*, the lifting of parasols, the waving of handkerchiefs and the deep sound of the joyous thanks, he got down from his elephant. He bowed down before the Relics, offered flowers to them and then he lifted them up on his elephant's back. Leading the procession himself he showed the Relics to the thousands of people, who had assembled.

With rattle of drums and shouts of "Sadhu" from the people, the procession marched through the streets and out of the town to the high-way.

But dreadful thunderclouds had gathered, lightning began to flash, the thunder rolled and the rain began to fall in torrents. How could the procession proceed?

The ministers looked imploringly at the King, but the King shouted: "Proceed, let not your minds be troubled." And the procession went on and the rain-cloud burst and flooded every thing around them.

But the procession marched on and tradition says: "The rain-cloud came before the great procession and moved along before it, raining just so much only, as was enough to lay the dust of the earth."

When the procession returned, the King placed the Relics in the temple again and held a festival of lights for seven nights through

* A native kettle-drum.

the whole city of Polonnaruwa and Polonnaruwa looked like a "City of Light," shining out into the darkness of the world.

["How beautiful it must have been," cried the girls.]

Parakrama-Bahu however could not maintain peace in the country, till he had completely subdued Sugala and her Ruhuna chiefs, who rebelled again. Then, when all was quiet in Lanka, he had to send an army to Aramana (part of Burma) where the King had insulted some of Parakrama-Bahu's ambassadors. Unfortunately most of the ships which were sent to Aramana were destroyed by a storm, but still the leader of the Navy with a few ships were saved, Aramana was conquered and the Sinhalese General riding on the white Burmese state-elephant proclaimed the authority of King Parakrama-Bahu in Aramana. Aramana had to send every year a number of elephants as tribute, but the Monks of that Buddhist country succeeded in re-establishing friendship between Aramana and Lanka after a while. To India, King Parakrama-Bahu sent his famous General Lakapura, who conquered Pandya, built towns in memory of this victory and ordered coins to be made with Parakrama-Bahu's name on them. In the course of time a great part of Southern India, became tributary to the King of Lanka.

While his generals were fighting in India making his name famous there, Parakrama-Bahu himself was very busy in Lanka.

He drained marshes, cut canals and made tanks. It is said that more than a thousand tanks were made by his orders. One canal a hundred miles long, connected several immense tanks and the whole could be used for irrigation purposes and for conveying produce. All these irrigation-works became known as "The Sea of Parakrama-Bahu."

The cultivator could again open the sluices of his village-tank, which watered his paddy-fields, again he had his plentiful paddy-harvest and his grateful eyes turned to the ruler in Polonnaruwa, who proud and handsome, strong and honest ruled with an iron, but just arm, over his adoring subjects.

Granaries were built all over the country to store up the surplus paddy which was now abundantly produced. Alms-houses for the poor and hospitals for the sick were constructed. The King himself supervised the hospitals in Polonnaruwa, for he was a skilful surgeon and a pretty little story is told of how he cured a sick crow.

It is said that a crow, which had a swelling on its head came to one of his hospitals every day, and would not be driven away. It hung its wings down, as if they were broken and cawed so pitifully that King Parakrama-Bahu, when he heard it caw one day, took compassion on it and had it taken into the hospital. He treated it himself and very soon the crow was cured. Then he had it put on the back of an elephant and so it was carried round the city.

A crier, running before the elephant, related the story of the crow and thus told all the people, that the King cured even birds of their troubles. Then the crow was set free again and the King established hospitals for animals and birds as well.

In this way King Parakrama-Bahu gained the love of his subjects and that of his four-legged subjects too.

For his capital Polonnaruwa, King Parakrama-Bahu had a great love. He took great pleasure in improving and enlarging it. It had suffered a great deal from all the fighting, and could hardly be called a city, when the King first took possession of it. He surrounded it with fortifications and built very high ramparts with three lesser walls inside.

For himself he built a splendid palace, seven stories high, called the Vijayanta. It contained a thousand rooms and was supported on hundred columns. It had many gilded pinnacles on the roof and the doors and windows were made of gold and it was surrounded by a magnificent garden.

King Parakra-Bahu built a circular house for the recital of Jataka-Stories in the middle of the city; and he also built a theatre, which glittered with golden pillars, for the acting of religious plays. On the walls were paintings, representing his own life.

He built the Thuparama-Vihara, an oblong building with a square tower and with walls five feet thick. Twelve statues of the Buddha



The Thuparua in Polonnaruwa, (as it is now.)

(To face page 208.)



(All rights reserved.)

The Gal-Vihara in Polonnaruwa (as it is now.)

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were inside and at the foot of the middle statue, at the Western wall, a large granite slab used to be the resting place of the great King, when tired after his labours. An inscription on it tells us of his great deeds.

The greatest of his sacred buildings were the Jetawanarama Vihare and College which were given over to the Monks of Polonnaruwa, as the Brazen Palace had been given to the Monks of Anuradhapura by King Duttu-Gemunu of old. The Jetawanarama Vihara had walls twelve feet thick and eighty feet high and a colossal statue of the Buddha, sixty feet high; was erected opposite the entrance columns. The college of Jetawanarama consisted of five hundred-and-twenty houses, besides many pokunas (baths) and gardens.

Parakrama-Bahu constructed a Rock-Temple, which is known up to the present time as the Gal-Vihara, with two huge figures of the Buddha cut out from the rock. One is a reclining statue, forty-six feet long and one sitting in meditation, fifteen feet high. At the side of the recumbent figure stands Ananda, the Buddha's favourite disciple, twenty-three feet high.*

For the Tooth-Relic, a magnificent Temple was built with roofs of gold, and a pinnacle of solid gold. Parakrama's beautiful and accomplished wife, Queen Rupawattie, built the

* The Gal-Vihara is at present in a good state of preservation and it is visited again, as of old, by a large number of Buddhist pilgrims.

Rankot Dagoba (gold-dust Dagoba) which glittered with the gold-powder mixed in the white chunam covering.*

Many other sacred buildings, did King Parakrama-Bahu erect, and when all were finished, he, like King Devanampiya-Tissa of old, took the handle of his golden plough into his own hands and made the boundary-circle round the holy buildings.

In order to reform the priesthood, he held a large meeting in Polonnaruwa, where he presided himself in judgment over the monks. He disrobed very many priests, who did not lead the lives of monks. But he gave them high lay offices, which they filled well. He reconciled the different sects in Buddhism and so after a short time, the priesthood became honoured again and the Buddha-Dharma was taught in its purity. Temple-Schools were re-organized and the youths of the country were educated.

For the comfort of his people, Parakrama-Bahu laid out more than twenty Parks, planted with hundreds of fruit and flowering trees and erected fountains and baths. Lotus-ponds with saras † standing solemnly on one leg, were seen in these gardens and peacocks and kolicas ‡ were strutting about. Glowing flower-beds, with their white and yellow, red

* This Vihara stands yet. The tower is specially in good preservation with figures in-relief on it. But there is no trace of the gold left.

† Sara—Indian crow.

‡ Kolica—Indian cuckoo.

and lilac blossoms, and flowering creepers which formed natural garlands from tree to tree delighted the eyes of the people.

Straight streets, planted with avenues of trees, many palaces, handsome dwelling-houses and shops, made Polonnaruwa the most beautiful city in Lanka. It was a city of beauty and splendour. It was twelve miles broad and thirty miles long.

Gorgeous elephant-processions, headed by the King himself, or by the Chiefs of the country, marched to the magnificent temples in Polonnaruwa, as they had done in ancient times in Anuradhapura and devotion and piety filled the hearts of the Sinhalese, who would do all in their power for their Religion and their King.

And Lanka shone forth once more, as in times gone by, with its white dagobas, its gilded palaces, its flower gardens, smiling into the deep-blue tropical sky.

Lanka's second Golden Age had come !

Thirty-three years (1164—1197) did King Parakrama-Bahu reign and the latter part of his rule, after the wars were over, brought all this blessing to his beloved Lanka. He had fulfilled the prophecy, given at his birth, that he would unite the whole of Lanka under one rule. He had also subdued his enemies with his strong arm, as his name indicated, and he left his kingdom in peace and in a more flourishing condition than it had been for hundreds of years.

At the present day, the traces of the glorious city of Polonnaruwa, have almost disappeared, it is now a heap of interesting ruins, round which some of you may perhaps yet find indications of its former grandeur. But the statue of the old King Parakrama-Bahu the Great stands yet, cut in the rock, with the law-book in his hand, and looking towards the ruined Pot-Gul Vihara, his old University of Learning, where the tumbled-down walls and the lonely columns indicate the place where the eager students lived and learned during his reign.

All the work of his life-time is in ruins, but he himself yet rules, as if it were, over them. He stands there, untouched by the centuries' decay. And never will his name and fame be forgotten in Lanka !

[With a sigh did the mother rise from her chair; for she knew, that shortly after the great King had passed away from all his work the glory of Lanka had faded away too, as quickly as it had burst forth once more under the magic touch of the hand of the great King Parakrama-Bahu.

The children too were very quiet and subdued, looking at the serious face of their mother. They did not ask any questions, for they seemed to anticipate some misfortune and kept back their enquiries for the next evening.]



The Statue of King Parakrama-Bahu the Great.

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[“ Before I go on with the last part of my stories, my children,” said the mother, the next evening,” “ I must tell you now that our stories are drawing to an end, I will answer those questions which I knew you wished to ask me last night. Somehow none of us were in the mood to ask questions after we had lost our great King Parakrama-Bahu, the greatest of the Sinhalese Kings of the later period of History. But there is no use in grieving over those things which cannot be avoided.”

“ Who of my little maids wants to know something ? ”

Leelawattie got up and said : “ Please dear mother explain to me what a ‘ civil war ’ is. I know what a war is, but I do not understand the word ‘ civil.’ ”

“ My dear child,” answered the mother, “ a ‘ civil war ’ is the worst of all the wars. It is a war which takes place in the same country, between the people of the same nation. When the Sinhalese fought against the Sinhalese, sometimes one brother against another brother, if he happened to be in the opposite party ; when the people of Ruhuna, led by Queen Sugala, rebelled against Parakrama-Bahu, and when they fought against each other, such fights were ‘ civil wars.’ Do you understand now, my little one ? ”

“ Yes, thank you dear mother, I understand now,” said Leelawattie very seriously nodding her head,” and I think, if one of my brothers fights with his own brother, that is a ‘ civil war ’ in a small way.”

All the girls laughed and applauded the little girl for her clever words.

The mother continued : “ I have now only to mention a few facts of History before I close my series of stories and good many of them are sad ones. But as I am telling “ history stories ” I must candidly speak of the decline of the kingdom as I have told you of the glory of Lanka.

So let us turn our faces bravely to the end.”]

VANDALISM.

With the death of King Parakrama-Bahu I. the greatness of the Sinhalese really ended, the Sinhalese monarchy had lost its last great hero.

The glories of the ‘ Second Golden Age ’ of Lanka lasted for a little while yet, but soon trouble and darkness came over it.

Strange to say, again, as in the reigns of King Devanampiya-Tissa and Duttu-Gemunu, there was no son to follow in the foot-steps of the great father. History does not mention whether Parakrama-Bahu the Great left any children, but it is stated that his sister’s son, Vijaya-Bahu II, became King, after his uncle’s death. He was a great Pali scholar. He was very gentle and merciful. He set at liberty all the people who had been imprisoned by his great uncle and restored their property to

them. But after three years of reign, he was murdered by his false friend Mahinda, who in his turn was killed by a Sinhalese Prince coming from Kalinga, named Sri Kirti Nissanka Malla. He was a pious King and did a great deal for Buddhism. He enlarged the Rock-Temple at Dambulla, and he had the large stone slab called Gal-pota brought from Mihintale to Polonnaruwa, where it can be seen yet, covered with inscriptions in praise of his fame. The great stone-lion, on which his throne rested, can yet be seen in the Colombo Museum where it has been brought from Polonnaruwa.* Sri Kirti Nissanka Malla built several beautiful Viharas and restored ruined ones. But he was not as strong as Parakrama-Bahu I. had been, and gradually the dark cloud which had gathered over Lanka's blue sky became more gloomy. Yet a few more years and it burst, for the most merciless of all Tamil invasions occurred. Two Queens reigned during this time. The widow of Parakrama-Bahu the Great, Leelawattie, reigned three times, and was three times dethroned, and Kalyanawattie, the widow

* When the author was travelling in the old fashioned mail coach from Matale to Habarana (on her way to Polonnaruwa) she met a young man, who told her that it was his father, who brought the stone lion from Polonnaruwa to Colombo by the order of the Ceylon Government. It took 27 days to bring it from Polonnaruwa to Habarana. It was pulled by two elephants and as there was no road, they had to cut a road way through the thick jungle and they could only thus make one mile a day. Of course from Habarana to Colombo, it went quicker as there was a road.

of Kirti Nissanka Malla, reigned for six years, between the separate rules of Leelawattie.

History says, to punish Lanka for some evil deed, Magha, a Tamil Prince from Kalinga, came over with twenty-thousand soldiers and invaded Lanka in the year 1225. He forced the people to give up their religion. He commanded his soldiers 'to scour the kingdom of Lanka, even as a wild fire does a forest'! And how well did his soldiers execute his commands! They robbed the wealthy Sinhalese of their possessions, their garments, and jewels. They cut off their hands and feet or they bound them and tortured them to confess where their wealth was hidden. They broke down the Temples, melted the golden statues and destroyed the Dagobas all over the Island. They drove the Monks out of their monasteries and dwelt in them, themselves. They assaulted the high-caste people, imprisoned them and made them carry burdens, and they burned many religious books.

When they had finished this general destruction, they came to Polonnaruwa the beautiful, surrounded it, took possession of it, plundered and stole all the wealth which was stored up there, and destroyed everything they could.

All the beautiful buildings, with their glittering golden roofs, their shining pinnacles, their white columns, were made into a heap of ruins! All the wealth of the inhabitants was carried away.—And poor Polonnaruwa lay in ruins like Anuradhapura!—

Then Magha, the Tamil Prince, made himself King and during his reign of twenty-one years (1225—1246) he acted like a tyrant. The Sinhalese were very unhappy under his cruel and strong hand.

[“How dreadful, how dreadful,” cried the girls, “beautiful Polonnaruwa is also destroyed! And great Parakrama-Bahu had made it into such a glorious city!”]

THE LAST GOOD KINGS OF LANKA.

Fortunately there were some faithful chiefs left, who built themselves fortresses on inaccessible mountains, and who protected a good many of the people of the land.

In Dambadeniya, a Prince named Vijaya-Bahu, a descendant of King Sri Sangha-Bo, showed a good deal of valour. He succeeded after a long struggle, in driving the Tamils out of the ‘King’s Country’ and out of Ruhuna, so that they had to content themselves with living in the North of Lanka. His son Parakrama-Bahu II. was very learned and he earned the name of “the all-knowing Pandit.” With all his learning he was also very brave and he succeeded in driving the Tamils up further North in the Island, and he

also defeated some bands of Malays, who had come over from Java, deceiving the Sinhalese by saying that they were Buddhists. They shot poisoned arrows at the people and laid waste a great part of the Island.

After proving his bravery in this way, Parakrama-Bahu II. repaired and restored buildings and tanks and Lanka began to prosper again for a little while. He improved Anuradhapura and Polonnaruwa by clearing the jungle, which was already growing over the ruins and he restored and rebuilt some of the Viharas and Palaces. But he did not make Polonnaruwa his capital, he resided in Dambadeniya. He built temples at Kurunegala, Kelaniya, Gampola, Bentota, Dondra and Attanagala. All these places are far apart from each other and that shows that he had gained a good deal of power over the whole of the Island.

It was also in his reign that the Mahavansa, the old History of Ceylon, was written up by a learned monk, named Dharma Kirti, who continued the History, where Mahanama of old had stopped, from King Mahasen to King Parakrama-Bahu II.

Our second Parakrama-Bahu also tried to beautify Lanka again, he laid out useful fruit and flower-gardens and he made a better road to Adams-Peak.

During his reign a great drought came over Lanka and everything was dried up. The harvests failed and famine was almost certain to come. The people were frightened

and they appealed to the King, whom they believed to be pious enough to cause the rain-clouds to fall. And Parakrama-Bahu II. went to the different temples and made offerings and he meditated and prayed and took the Tooth-relic and bore it in procession round the city. Then (History says) the rain-clouds gathered and the lightning flashed, the thunder rolled and torrents of rain came down as in the times of old, when Sri Sangha-Bo, the saintly King, had prostrated himself in the court of the Ruanweli-Dagoba and brought down the rain. The thirsty earth drank in draughts of the refreshing and life-bringing rain and Lanka smiled like a happy child.

The people praised the King and loved him and they became better Buddhists themselves. They said, that if the King had not brought them the rain by his piety, all Lanka would have been like a desert.

Quite touching it is to read how Parakrama-Bahu II. called his five sons and his nephew together and how he advised them to be 'high-born' sons, as he had tried to be himself. He told them that high-born sons, are those who add to what they have inherited from their forefathers and enjoy it in happiness. Then he told them how he had received only a small part of the Island from his father and how he had united the whole of Lanka under one head, how he had subdued the Tamils and how even in strange lands he had won fame, and how he had governed the kingdom with justice. "I have

gathered wealth which is sufficient for all of you and for your families" he said "and I have loved religion. So I have proved myself 'high-born' and I want you, my sons to prove yourselves to be 'high born' sons. Divide Lanka yourselves, as it seems good to you, govern the country in peace, and let not your enemies see that you are the least divided among yourselves."

Thus did King Parakrama-Bahu II. try to instil courage and goodness into his sons and through his brave and good example he brought back a short-lived glory to Lanka.

He called his Ministers and his Priests together and asked them, which of those six Princes, they considered best fitted to be his successor. Then the Priests said that all the Princes were good and pious, but that his eldest son, Vijaya-Bahu, had done so many good deeds among the people, that even the small children, taught by their mothers, said, they would serve Vijaya-Bahu. The ministers also told the King that Vijaya-Bahu had won the hearts of all the people, great and small, and that he had settled quarrels and helped the poor people. The little children, when they were beaten by their parents, would run to Prince Vijaya-Bahu for protection.

The King, with tears of joy in his eyes, set his eldest son on the throne beside him and instructed him in all things which he wanted him to do, and he placed the other five Princes under him and gave the government of Lanka over to him.

Prince Vijaya-Bahu proved himself the high-born son of his high-born father. He gave the defence of the country to two of his younger brothers, and made the two others remain with the King and he himself, with his cousin, Vera-Bahu, began to restore Anuradhapura and make it habitable again. Then he repaired and built Viharas, drove the Tamils away again, who wanted to re-conquer Lanka and then he set to work to build up Polonnaruwa which was (as History says) ugly to look at with its fallen towers, ruined Palaces and half fallen Viharas and Temples.

He called all the artisans and workmen of the Island together and soon the noble city of Polonnaruwa looked beautiful again.

Then Prince Vijaya-Bahu sent for his father and with great joy the coronation-festival for his father, Parakrama-Bahu II. was celebrated as in olden times, with seven days festivities. Then Prince Vijaya-Bahu brought the Tooth-relic and Alms-bowl-relic back to Polonnaruwa and installed them again with great ceremonies in the restored ancient temple of the Relics.

The Prince, after he had accomplished all these things in the name of his father the King, would not claim any praise for it, but laid all the merit of his doings at the feet of his father, who blessed him. Thus he proved himself to be the high-born son of his father.

King Parakrama-Bahu II. left his mortal

body in the year 1285 and now the people, with enthusiasm, crowned Vijaya-Bahu IV. who chose Polonnaruwa as his capital, which he had restored almost to its former beauty.

All hopes and expectations of the Sinhalese were centered on Vijaya-Bahu IV. who had won all hearts through his courage, energetic work and devotion to his father. But envy and jealousy brought him an early death, to the great sorrow of his subjects and the misfortune of Lanka.

In the second year of his splendid reign 1298, one of his generals, Mitrasena, bribed, one of the King's servants, to kill Vijaya-Bahu IV. The King's brother, Buvaneka-Bahu I. when he heard of this dreadful deed, fled from his city Dambadeniya to the fortress Yapahu, where the murderer hired by Mitrasena, who intended to kill him also, could not follow him. Mitrasena, set himself on the throne in Dambadeniya, but the soldiers of the 'army of strangers' (not born in the country) came against him and murdered him.

[“How dreadful it seems, that the good King Vijaya-Bahu was murdered, after he had done so much for Lanka” said Tilaka sighing deeply. “I see quite plainly how the glory of Lanka is fading quickly. Oh poor Lanka! why have you lost all your former greatness and why are your people beginning to get

worse and worse ! I could cry, if that would help my country."

"I think this second Parakrama-Bahu, was almost as great a King as the first Parakrama-Bahu. It seems that only great Kings had that name," said Mallika.

"Yes dear, Parakrama-Bahu, is a good name. There were several Parakrama-Bahus, who were remarkable men," answered the mother. "But although, there were some good Kings who lived after the death of the 'great' Parakrama-Bahu, you must all see as Tilaka does, that the glory of Lanka is fading away and the Kings are having less and less power. Quarrels and troubles were everywhere and civil strife filled the country. I am trying to pick out the best events I can for you and leave it to those who write History, not "Historical Stories," to tell you all the dreadful things that have happened.

"To-morrow, I am afraid, will be the last of our historical evenings, as I am not taking up the newer period of the History of Ceylon."]

THE END.

King Vijaya-Bahu's brother Buvaneka-Bahu I. became King and he gained the love of his subjects by his just rule. He had the Buddhist Scriptures, 'the Three Pitakas'

re-written by Pali scribes and distributed them through the whole Island. But the peace was disturbed again, during his reign, by the invasions of the Tamils under a famous general, named Ariya Chakravarti, who invaded Yapahu and took the Tooth-relic and other treasures away to India.

Buyaneka-Bahu's successor, Parakrama-Bahu III. the son of the brave and good Vijaya-Bahu IV. succeeded in regaining this Relic. This time not by war, but by persuasion. He went over to India and made himself so liked by King Kulasekara of Pandya that the Indian King handed to him the Relic as a gift, and it was placed again in the Temple of Polonnaruwa.

Once more Polonnaruwa became the capital of Lanka, under Parakrama-Bahu III. but after his death it was abandoned and never again was it the capital. It had been the royal city, with a few interruptions for about four-hundred-and-fifty years.

The name of another great King I have to mention is Parakrama-Bahu IV. who translated from Pali into Sinhalese the five-hundred-and-fifty Jataka Stories.* He had read them out in an assembly of great Monks and when they approved of them, he had them written down and copies were distributed all over the country. He also built a Temple for the Tooth-relic in Kuru-negala three stories high, and he wrote a book on the Tooth-relic.

* Stories of former births of the Lord Buddha.

The Kings who succeeded him resided either in Kurunegala, or Gampola. During the reign of Vikrama-Bahu IV. his Prime-Minister Alakeswara, a very remarkable man, built the city of Jayawardhanapura, now called Kotte or Cotta.

The Tamils, who had by this time founded a kingdom in the North of Lanka, with the capital Jaffna, troubled the Sinhalese again. But Alakeswara defeated them, and they lost some of their power. He made himself King and reigned as Buvaneka-Bahu V. from 1378-1398. He lived in the city of Kotte which he had built up himself.

Under King Vira-Bahu II. a Chinese general came to Ceylon with incense and other offerings to a Buddhist shrine. But, unfortunately, he was misunderstood and offended by the Sinhalese and he returned displeased to China. He came back to Ceylon with an army and made the King and his family prisoners. He however released them again on the condition, that Vira-Bahu should give up the throne of Lanka, and that the wisest of the family should have the crown. So Sri Parakrama-Bahu VI. became King in 1410 and the Sinhalese had to pay tribute to China for fifty years.

During his long reign of fifty-two-years, he subdued the Tamils so far that the kingdom of Jaffna became a province under the rule of the Sinhalese King.

Sri-Parakrama-Bahu VI. was a patron of literature and he was a good scholar. At his

court lived the greatest Sinhalese poet, Totagamuwe-Sri-Rahula.

His fourth successor Vira-Parakrama-Bahu VIII. devoted himself more to his religion than to the government of his country. He, in fact, was not strong enough as a ruler, and he could not control his kingdom. But for his religion he worked very zealously. He had the Tooth-relic brought to Kandy and (History says) he had one hundred and forty caskets made for relics.

He also had the road to Adam's-Peak repaired and some steps cut into the rock to make the ascent easier.

In order to show his devotion to religion, he worked a paddy-field himself and brought the produce of his labour as an offering to the temple, because he had read that an offering would be greater, in value of merit, if it were the outcome of one's own labour.

Under the reign of his son, Dharma-Bahu IX. who had also Kotte as his capital, in the year 1505, the first visit of the Portuguese occurred. They were described to him as beautiful white men, with boots and helmets, who drank red wine and who could shoot from a canon a ball which would destroy a strong fortress.

King Dharma-Bahu IX. was advised to make an alliance with them, as they were dangerous, and so he received a deputation from the Portuguese and treated them very kindly. They left Ceylon soon, but the commander of the Portuguese ship, Lorenzo de Almeida, had seen too

much of Ceylon and its treasures and gave such a glorious account of it to the King of Portugal, that he decided to conquer Ceylon and add it to his foreign possessions. Ceylon was also so conveniently situated near his Indian possessions, of which Goa was the capital, that in the year 1517, he sent seventeen ships to Ceylon. First the Portuguese built a factory near the coast, then a fortress to protect (they said) this factory against the attacks of the Moors, with whom they were at war. Then, they first subdued the Sinhalese near the coast, and slowly they advanced into the interior, till, in spite of some sharp fighting by the Sinhalese, almost the whole of the Island fell under the Portuguese rule. And the Sinhalese Kings, who had retained some of their power in the interior, as Kings of Kandy, became weaker and weaker.

[“ But, my children, these modern historical events you may read in the Ceylon History books and I will now close my talks from the History of Ceylon with just a few more remarks.”

In May 1602 the Dutch Admiral Joris Van Spilbergen in his good ship cast anchor in Batticaloa Bay and, after some hard fighting with the Portuguese, the latter were driven away and the Dutch became masters of the Low-country. They held possession till 1795

of the whole coast of Ceylon. At this time war was going on between England and Holland and a British force came over to Ceylon, landed in Trincomalee and besieged it for three weeks. After the capture of it, hardly any resistance was made by the Dutch and, at the Peace of Amiens 1802,* it was agreed that Ceylon should become a British possession.

During these wars in Ceylon with the foreign powers, the Sinhalese Kings had yet held possession of the Kandyan Country and only in the year 1815 was the kingdom of Kandy ceded to the British and the last Kandyan King, Sri Vikrama-Raja-Sinha, who had made himself hated owing to his cruelty was deposed.

A Convention was held in the Kandyan Audience-Hall, presided over by Sir Robert Brownrigg and a Treaty was read both in English and Sinhalese, by which Sri Vikrama-Raja-Sinha was deposed, because 'he had violated every religious and moral law by his cruelty,' and the Kandyan kingdom, which had belonged to the Sinhalese up to this time, was declared to belong to the British Crown.

The ancient Sinhalese Rule, which had lasted for about 2400 years, was now at an end.

“ And so, my children,” said the mother
 “ I am also at the end of my stories from the

* The Peace of Amiens ended the war between England and France.

History of Ceylon, the latter part of which can hardly be called stories, but have been just historical facts. I hope you have liked my stories and learnt a great deal from what I have told you.

“ You have heard how devoted the Sinhalese of old were to their Buddhist Religion, brought to them by King Asoka’s Royal children, Mahinda and Sanghamitta. You have seen how, in spite of innumerable invasions the Sinhalese hero-Kings, Duttu-Gemunu, Vala-gamba, Parakrama-Bahu and others re-established their authority and made Ceylon shine again and again in glory and beauty. But you have also found out how the glory faded away gradually, how the Kings became weaker and weaker, and how the Sinhalese became poorer and poorer, and how the last Sinhalese King was dethroned on account of his cruelty.

“ Happy and sad we have been together, following the events of History !

“ But now, my children, the worst time has passed. When we look round now, we see that the times are better again. We see how gradually prosperity is returning to Ceylon. We see that the British Government is repairing the old Tanks, and that new paddy-fields are shining out again in their beautiful green. The famous ruins in our old capitals seem to grow out again from their ashes, in speaking grandeur. The Sinhalese youths are gathered together again in schools, and best of all, the British Government has given

religious freedom, so that no Buddhist need be afraid of confessing his adherence to his religion. So we ought to be grateful to the British Government because better times have come for Ceylon and for the Sinhalese.

“Friendship between West and East makes Ceylon at the present time a favourite resort for visitors, who praise its beauty and look with admiration on the ruins of Anuradhapura and Polonnaruwa and wonder at the grand old civilisation, which could produce such monuments. You, my children, need not be ashamed of being Sinhalese. Lift up your heads and try to be as brave and lofty in character and as spiritual-minded as the good Sinhalese of old.”

“But how can we prove ourselves to be real Sinhalese?” asked Yaseli.

“By loving your country, by learning your language thoroughly, by honouring and living your religion and retaining your good old national customs, and by wearing your own beautiful and graceful costumes, through which you will prove that you are Sinhalese.

“There is a great tendency at present, among many Sinhalese who have been taught in English ways, to forget everything that is Sinhalese or national and to try to become English, which is an impossibility. Learn the English language certainly, and be loyal to the good British Government, but do not forget that you are Sinhalese! Do not let your nation die out.”

The girls looked up to their “white mother”

with shining eyes and each of them promised to herself that she would try to be a real Sinhalese.

“The smaller girls were rather bewildered after the last little address from their mother, because they did not grasp the meaning of it fully, and they thought they were real Sinhalese girls. But they came nearer very shyly, looked pleadingly at her and Somawattie (the little impudent sage) said, speaking for all of them: “You are looking so solemn, mother dear; are you not going to tell us any more stories, now that the History stories are finished?”

“Well,” answered the mother, “my dear little girls, perhaps I can find some other Indian and Ceylon stories to tell you, if you are very anxious to hear some more!”

“Oh! how splendid!” cried the little girls, clapping their hands. Now we shall be so very anxious to come back to school after the holidays, for the story-telling evenings are the best in the whole school-time.”

“Well, well, my little ones, that will not do at all,” said the mother, “learning ought to be the best of school time.”

“Yes, mother dear,” said little Somawattie nodding her head seriously. “But we like to learn best, by listening to the stories you tell us.”

The big girls lingered round their mother and then Amarawattie spoke for all and said: “Dear mother, we can hardly express to you

our thanks for all the trouble you have taken in telling us all the pretty stories from our own History. They have been most interesting and have taught us so much, and we shall never forget the happy times we spent while listening to our dear mother telling us the "Stories from the History of Ceylon."

THE END.

